



**REQUEST FOR QUOTES**

*Developing a Watershed Restoration Plan  
for the Cocalico Creek Watershed*

*March/2026*

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## 1.0 General Provisions

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### 1.1 Project Purpose

The Nature Conservancy ("Customer") intends to solicit Proposals for a Restoration Services Vendor (see Appendix A. Scope of Work). Those receiving this Request for Quotes are referred to as "Vendor."

The Nature Conservancy ("The Conservancy") is seeking information from qualified Vendors to develop a Watershed Restoration Plan for the Cocalico Creek Watershed (see Appendix B. Watershed of Interest Map). The Cocalico Creek Watershed Plan was last updated in 2008. Revisions are needed to reflect new data and identify new priorities. With the [Lancaster Clean Water Partners](#) identifying Harnish Run as a Priority Delisting Watershed, the updated plan will serve as a strategic roadmap guiding restoration efforts by pinpointing key sites, stream reaches, and even sub-watersheds for intervention and acceleration of restoration projects focused on reversing impairments. Restoration of wetlands—particularly riverine wetlands—will be a key focus of this plan.

The Watershed Restoration Plan will build upon existing resources, documenting existing efforts and identifying new and emerging restoration opportunities to guide future water quality, quantity, and wetland habitat restoration across the watershed. This Restoration Plan will catalyze collective implementation for at-scale projects that accelerate progress toward broader conservation goals within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. It will foster collaboration, not duplication, and build the trust necessary to co-create and co-fund on-the-ground, at-scale water-quality and habitat-improvement projects.

The Watershed Restoration Plan will also identify a set of high-impact "anchor, or catalytic, or bead and string" projects that demonstrate what it takes to deliver durable restoration outcomes at scale. Anchor, catalytic, or bead and string projects are projects that advance restoration at a meaningful physical scale, or are critical within a reach, watershed, or geomorphic context, or serve as critical connectors to greater cumulative efforts, etc. Equal emphasis will be placed on projects that unlock progress by addressing systemic barriers, including policy, planning, and financing constraints that limit restoration outcomes. Together, these projects will be selected for their ability to generate outsized conservation impact, influence market and policy levers, and produce transferable lessons that can be replicated in other watersheds to accelerate restoration across the Chesapeake Basin.

More Project information can be found in Appendix A.

### 1.2 Vendor Qualifications and Obligations

**Vendor Obligations.** Vendor must analyze and respond to all sections of this RFQ, providing sufficient information to allow Customer to evaluate the Proposal. By submitting its Proposal, the Vendor agrees that any costs incurred in responding to this RFQ are the Vendor's responsibility and may not be billed to the Customer.

**Vendor Qualifications.** To be considered for the Project, the Vendor must demonstrate the following:

- **Relevant Experience**  
Demonstrated experience developing watershed-scale restoration or management plans, including watershed assessments, restoration prioritization, and implementation frameworks.

Prior experience working in the project region or in similar watershed settings, including engagement with local stakeholders, regulatory agencies, and conservation partners.

- **Technical Expertise**

Demonstrated access to qualified technical staff with expertise relevant to watershed restoration planning (e.g., hydrology, water quality, ecology, geomorphology, GIS, or related disciplines).

- **Stakeholder and Partnership Engagement**

Proven experience coordinating with multiple partners and stakeholders, including public agencies, nonprofit organizations, and community representatives, and incorporating stakeholder input into planning processes.

- **Regulatory and Funding Alignment**

Demonstrated familiarity with regulatory, funder, and reporting requirements commonly associated with watershed restoration planning, and experience producing plans that support future project funding and implementation. Ability to implement and potentially improve a Restoration Decision Matrix used to evaluate restoration need and priority (see Table 1).

- **Restoration Prioritization and Planning Approach**

Experience developing restoration goals, evaluation criteria, and prioritized project concepts that support measurable conservation and community outcomes at a watershed scale.

- **Project Management and Deliverables**

Demonstrated ability to manage complex planning projects, meet a tight schedule, and deliver high-quality written and visual products appropriate for both technical and non-technical audiences.

- **Organizational Capacity and Compliance**

Ability to meet standard contractual, insurance, and compliance requirements and to adhere to The Nature Conservancy's procurement and contracting policies.

### 1.3 Submission Requirements

The Request for Quotes process will be conducted in a nondiscriminatory manner with fair treatment given to all prospective respondents. The Vendor shall be responsible for all costs incurred by the Vendor in responding to this request. The Vendor's Statement of Qualifications (SOQ) should not exceed 10 pages.

The Vendor's SOQ must contain sufficient information to allow the Project Team to evaluate the Vendor's ability to perform the required Scope of Work (see Appendix A) and also provide the following:

- **cover letter** summarizing the key elements of the respondent's SOQ and an overview of the consultant team and project manager;
- the **proposed team** for the Project (including each person's full name, title, and qualifications);
- **rate sheet and cost information** documenting standard rates for professional services. Rates must represent the respondent's customary charges and be defensible as reasonable and competitive. This information will be used to evaluate cost

reasonableness and to support contracting and invoicing if the respondent is selected.

- a **description of Vendor’s qualifications**, including examples of relevant project experience.
- a signed **conflict of interest form** (see Appendix C)

The Conservancy reserves the right to accept or reject any offer, or any portion thereof, to waive technicalities or irregularities, and to pursue purchasing in a manner deemed to be in the best interest of The Conservancy. All submittals must be emailed to PennBid.

## 1.4 Critical Dates

### 1.4.1 Questions regarding this RFQ

Any questions about this request must be submitted via email to the PennBid portal by March 18, 2026. The Conservancy will use its best efforts to answer questions by March 24, 2026. It is The Conservancy’s policy to avoid situations that (a) place it in a position where its judgment may be biased; (b) create an appearance of conflict of interest with respect to rendering an impartial, fair, technically sound, and objective decision before selection; or (c) give an unfair competitive advantage to competing bidders. The Vendor acknowledges that (a) answers provided by The Conservancy to any respondent inquiries will be shared with all respondents (via email or otherwise), and (b) The Conservancy is not required to supply answers that The Conservancy does not consider to be pertinent to this RFQ or are considered by The Conservancy to be proprietary or confidential.

### 1.4.2 Submittal due date

All SOQs must be submitted electronically via PennBid no later than 5:00 PM Eastern Time on Monday, March 30, 2026.

## 1.5 Review of SOQs

SOQs will be reviewed and evaluated by the Project Team based upon each Vendor’s qualifications and experience. All materials submitted in response to this RFQ will become the property of The Conservancy and may be returned only at the option of The Conservancy and at the Vendor’s expense.

Successful and unsuccessful Vendors will be notified. The Customer shall not be obligated to detail any of the results of the evaluation. Any data, documentation, or other business information furnished by or disclosed to the Vendor shall be deemed the property of the Customer.

The Conservancy may evaluate proposals through a multi-stage process that may include, but is not limited to: (1) evaluation of technical and financial proposals, (2) interviews or presentations with shortlisted suppliers, and (3) negotiations. Advancement between stages is at The Conservancy’s discretion. The Conservancy also reserves the right to review and negotiate pricing

prior to contract award. A contract award is not final until a written agreement is fully executed.

The Conservancy shall have no obligations or liabilities whatsoever by reason of the issuance of this RFQ or actions by anyone relating thereto.

**1.6 Anticipated Contract Type, Payment Terms, and Funding Considerations**

The Conservancy anticipates entering into a firm fixed-price contract for the services described herein. Payment will be based on satisfactory completion of agreed-upon deliverables. Any modification to the scope or pricing would require prior written agreement by both parties.

**Partial funding is currently available** and will be used to contract for a subset of the tasks identified in Appendix A. If additional funding becomes available, the contract may be expanded or amended to include select or the full range of tasks identified in Appendix A.

**If additional funding is obtained from one or more federal sources**, including, but not limited to, the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation, the Vendor shall comply with all applicable federal statutes, regulations, and funding requirements. Such requirements will be provided upon award and, if applicable, incorporated into the agreement by amendment.

## Appendix A: Project Background and Scope of Work

Watershed restoration plans are highly effective for promoting community and stakeholder engagement, engaging funders and regulators, and providing a foundation to achieve local and watershed-scale conservation goals.

An updated Watershed Restoration Plan for the Cocalico Creek Watershed (HUC 02050306) will support and advance the strategic partnership among The Nature Conservancy (TNC), the Cocalico Creek Watershed Association (CCWA), the Lancaster County Conservation District, the Lancaster County Farmland Trust, and others in their efforts to implement scalable, transformative restoration.

To advance these objectives, The Nature Conservancy will engage a Vendor to create an adaptive, action-oriented, and collaboratively developed restoration plan that will facilitate clear goal setting, targeted outreach, project implementation, and joint fundraising. The plan will prioritize the restoration of wetlands, with particular emphasis on riverine wetlands that deliver significant ecological and water-quality benefits.

The plan will spotlight a number of restoration opportunities, including, but not limited to, a select group of “anchor, or catalytic, and/or bead and string projects that demonstrate how at-scale watershed restoration can be achieved, either through substantial on-the-ground implementation or by catalyzing broader, connected efforts, etc. These projects may target policy, planning, and financing barriers, selected for their ability to drive disproportionate conservation gains and generate replicable models across the Chesapeake Basin.

**Geographic Scope.** The scope of the Restoration Plan update will include the Cocalico and Little Cocalico Creek Watersheds from the headwaters to the confluence with the Conestoga River, including tributaries, and Middle Creek, but excluding headwater portions of the Hammer Creek Watershed in Lebanon County (see Appendix B).

### A. Key Project Elements

**Task 1.** Partner Engagement. Include key partners in planning for the project and advance three partner meetings, at a minimum, to:

1. Review project objectives, discuss criteria for project selection, including the identification and selection of “anchor, or catalytic, or bead and string” projects, and agree on project approach and geographies.
2. Review Draft Deliverables for final feedback
3. Present Final Results for discussion

**Task 2.** Review and compile relevant history, site, wetland, stream reach, and watershed information, project plans, and prioritizations from previous planning efforts, including but not limited to:

- 2005 SRBC Northern Lancaster County Ground Water Study
- 2008 Cocalico Creek Watershed Restoration Plan
- 2014 Cocalico Creek Watershed Chesapeake Bay Pollution Reduction Plan
- TNC’s Upper Cocalico site and wetland inventory database. The plan will place particular emphasis on riverine wetland restoration as a high-impact strategy to achieve shared conservation and water-quality goals.
- Other relevant sources

Note. Existing Conceptual Restoration Plans, Implemented Restoration Plans, and the Upper Cocalico

Watershed Permit (PA DEP Chapter 105) will be key references for the assessment made available to the selected Vendor.

**Task 3.** Conduct a desktop assessment using historic maps, aerial photography, erosion and wetland maps ([University of Vermont's Modeled Restorable Wetlands \(2013\)](#)), applicable DEP Datasets, including but not limited to Pennsylvania Geomorphon Landform Maps 2021, Pennsylvania Valley Bottom Polygons 2019, Pennsylvania Stream Valley Intersections 2019, Penn State University DEP Topographic Wetness Index (TWI), BWEW PA Historic and Breached Dams, and spatial prioritization tools, as applicable—including, but not limited to, TNC's [Resilient River Explorer](#) and [Reconnecting America Waterways](#), as well as the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection Watershed Prioritization Tool—to evaluating existing and identify new restoration opportunities. The assessment will include an evaluation on the geomorphic context of potential restoration sites, stream reaches, and sub-watersheds. Frameworks that support understanding the site's geomorphic context, such as the [River Styles Framework](#), should be used to inform site evaluation where appropriate. Additional assessment frameworks, including the Morphological Quality Index (Rinaldi et al., 2013), developed in support of the EU Water Framework Directive, may also be applied for this purpose.

**Task 4.** Conduct “Windshield” Visits to:

- a. Verify the restoration priority and feasibility of *previously* identified priority projects and stream reaches, including confirmation of existing or potential riverine wetland features.
- b. Identify and evaluate the restoration priority and feasibility of a limited number of *new* potential sites, reaches, sub-watersheds, “anchor, or catalytic, and/or potentially “bead and string” projects, with emphasis on opportunities that include or could support riverine wetland restoration.
- c. Document with checklists, GPS, and photographs the severity of degradation, current habitat and functional condition, sites/reaches' geomorphic context, recovery potential and feasibility, access limitations, unique aspects to the restoration, sites needing more detailed investigations, etc.

Note: The above estimates assume approximately 4–8 days of “windshield” surveys. As needed, the Vendor will coordinate directly with landowners to ensure the windshield surveys can effectively assess site conditions.

**Task 5.** Utilize the Restoration Decision Matrix to evaluate up to five (5) additional sites that have not previously been evaluated for the purpose of determining priorities. Explore how other tools, such as the [River Styles Framework](#) and other tools noted by Wohl et al. (2023), and additional metrics, such as cost-benefit analysis, could be used to enhance the Decision Matrix and add categories as applicable. Following are the current Decision Matrix categories:

Table 1.

Functional Categories	Condition		Restoration Options		
	Natural	Degraded	Preferred Option	Option 2	No Action
Biodiversity	10	3	9	8	3
Soil Organic Carbon	10	2	10	8	2
Biogeochemistry	10	2	10	8	2
Sediment Storage	10	1	10	9	1
Base Level	10	2	10	10	2
Hyporheic Connectivity	10	0	10	9	0
Flood Attenuation	10	0	10	8	0
Surface Hydrodynamics	10	1	10	9	1
POM Storage	10	3	10	9	3
Food Supply	10	3	10	10	3
Habitat	10	3	8	8	3
Aquatic Organism Passage	10	5	10	10	5
Terrestrial Connection	10	0	10	10	0
<b>Average Resource Function</b>	<b>10.0</b>	<b>1.9</b>	<b>9.8</b>	<b>8.9</b>	<b>1.9</b>
Total Aquatic Resource Area (ac)	14.00	0.70	12.50	8.00	0.70
<b>Functional Magnitude</b>	<b>140.0</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>122.1</b>	<b>71.4</b>	<b>1.3</b>
Function Relative to Natural Condition		1%	87%	51%	1%
Function Relative to Degraded Condition			9071%	5303%	100%

**Task 6.** Advance a Rapid Morphological Condition Assessment. Using the resulting priorities identified via Tasks #2, # 3, #4, and #5, conduct a rapid field-based morphological condition assessment of up to 5 potential restoration priorities. The Vendor will evaluate current conditions, stressors, limitations, and identify recommended restoration approaches.

**Task 7.** Develop an updated GIS-based Watershed Restoration Plan Map that identifies and prioritizes past, currently planned, and future potential restoration sites, reaches, and sub-watersheds, including “anchor, or catalytic, or bead and string” projects.

**Task 8.** Provide an Interim Status Report (September 2026) and a Final Watershed Restoration Plan Narrative Report (May 2027) that summarizes assessment approaches, findings, and recommendations.

**Task 9.** Provide content, including narrative, images, maps, and shapefiles for the development of a story map.

B. **Deliverables** are contingent upon funding availability. If full funding is secured, deliverables may include the following:

- Completion of Tasks #1- #9
- At a minimum, three Facilitated Partner Meetings to Kick-Off the Project, Review Plan Status and Deliverables, and Present Final Results
- Watershed Restoration Plan Map identifying current and future restoration priorities accompanied by developed mapping shapefiles and associated metadata.
- Reporting
  - Interim Report (September 2026) documenting efforts and findings to date.
  - Final Watershed Restoration Plan Report (May 2027) describing approach, outcomes, and future recommendations.
- Content, including narrative, images, maps, and shapefiles for the development of a story map showcasing the findings of the effort.

### C. Budget

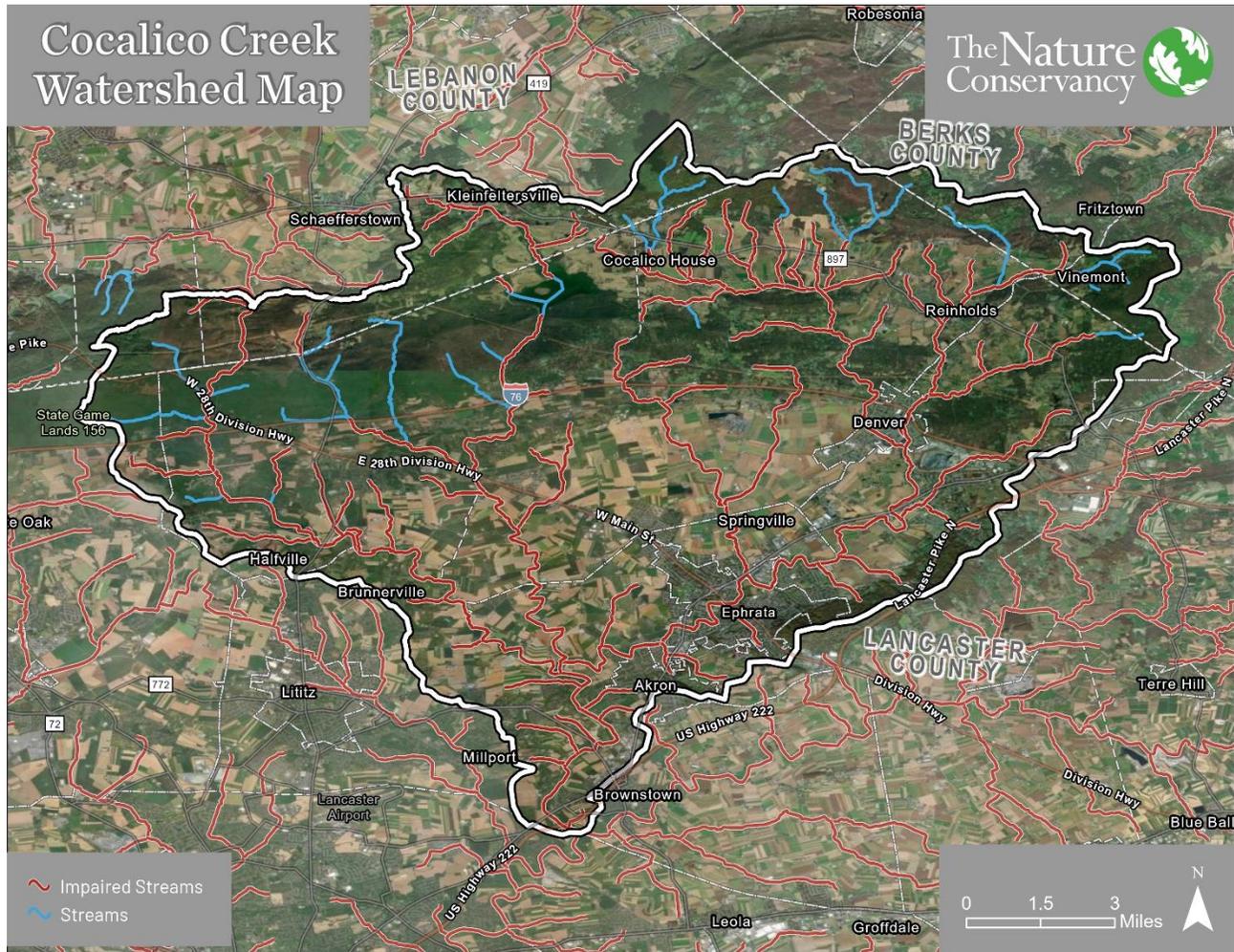
Please provide a line-item and total budget. Line items include but are not limited to:

- Task 1. Complete Stakeholder Engagement
- Task 2. Review/Compile information and prioritization from previous efforts
- Task 3. Conduct a Desktop Assessment of existing and new restoration priorities
- Task 4. Complete Windshield Surveys of existing and new restoration priorities
- Task 5. Prioritize All Potential Restoration Priorities
- Task 6. Complete Field-Based Morphological Assessment of Potential Priorities
- Task 7. Develop a Watershed Restoration Plan Map
- Task 8. Develop an Interim Status and a Final Watershed Restoration Report
- Task 9. Develop Story Map Content

#### **D. Schedule**

- **September 2026:** Watershed Restoration Plan anticipated to be approximately 33% complete, and an Interim Status Report due.
- **May 2027:** Watershed Restoration Plan anticipated to be 100% complete, subject to the availability of additional funding, with Final Deliverables due.

Appendix B. Watershed of Interest Map



## Appendix C. Conflict of Interest Form



## FOR-PROFIT CONFLICT INQUIRY FORM

STEP 1: DESCRIPTION OF PARTIES & TRANSACTION		
Name of for-profit organization entering into transaction with TNC:		
Type of Transaction (select one):	Contract for Services Grant Agreement Purchase Order	Licensing Agreement Real Estate Transaction Other
<i>Organization" includes a for-profit corporation, partnership, trust, estate, joint venture, limited liability corporation, professional corporation, an unincorporated entity, a foundation, public board, or commission.</i>		
If you selected "Other" or "Real Estate," include description here (for real estate, describe property, size, fair market value and type of deal (sale, gift, lease, etc.)). <b>Note:</b> The purchase or sale of any interest in real property or water rights to or from any Related Party is a prohibited transaction and requires review by the Conflicts Committee and the TNC Global Board of Directors. A donation of a conservation easement by a Covered Person or Controlled Entity also requires review by the Conflicts Committee.		
Total Amount of Proposed Contract:		

STEP 2: DEFINITIONS & QUESTIONS
<p>(1) <b>TNC Key Employees and Board of Directors:</b> Please refer to the <b>attached list</b> of Key Employees and members of Board of Directors (includes individuals who have left relevant TNC positions within the past five (5) years).</p> <p>(2) <b>Covered Person:</b> A Global Board Member, Key Employee, Trustee/Advisor, Staff Member, Substantial Contributor, Close Relative/Family Member or persons who have the ability to influence the decisions of TNC because of their relationship with TNC or their access to material information about TNC's work.</p> <p>(3) <b>Controlled Entity:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For-profit entity of any kind where a Covered Person, individually or collectively with other Covered Persons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. owns more than 35% of the stock or value of an organization (directly or indirectly); or</li> <li>b. has a controlling influence over the organization's management or policies (ex. key management or board member).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Nonprofit entity where a Covered Person, individually or collectively with other Covered Persons, is a board member, officer, director or key employee of the entity and has the ability to influence management of the entity.</li> </ul> <p>(4) <b>Related Party:</b> Any individual who is, or was at any time during the 12-month period ending on the date of the purchase or sale, a member of the Board of Directors, a Trustee (or comparable volunteer advisor, such as a</p>

Regional Council member), or an employee of TNC; any individual who is a close relative of such an individual; and/or an entity in which the individual (or their close relatives) directly or indirectly own(s) more than 5% of the equity interest therein.

- (5) **TNC Trustee:** Individuals serving as a Trustee or Advisor to TNC.
- (6) **Substantial Contributors:** Individuals or organizations who have made total aggregate contributions to TNC of (i)  $\geq$  US \$5 million during the current fiscal year or (ii)  $\geq$  US \$25 million within the last five (5) fiscal years. Fiscal years run from July 1st through June 30th.
- (7) **Family Members and Close Relatives:** Family members of any individual listed above, such as spouse, domestic partner, parent, sibling, child, dependent, other progeny, and ancestors.

STEP 2. SECTION 1. <b>FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS</b> (explain any "yes" answers in Step 3):	Yes	No
a. Is your organization a Substantial Contributor to TNC?		
b. Now, or at the time of the proposed transaction, to the best of your knowledge, do any of the following (individually or collectively with other persons) (i) own more than <u>35% of the stock or value</u> of your organization (directly or indirectly) and/or (ii) have a controlling influence over the organization's management or policies (e.g., key management or board member): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TNC employee (or former employee who left within the last twelve (12) months);</li> <li>• TNC Key Employee;</li> <li>• TNC Board Member;</li> <li>• Substantial Contributor to TNC;</li> <li>• TNC Chapter Trustee or Advisory Council Member for TNC or TNC's related entities (or former trustees/members who left within the last twelve (12) months); and/or</li> <li>• Family members or close relatives of the above individuals.</li> </ul>		
c. Now, or at the time of the proposed transaction, have or will any TNC Key Employees or members of the Board of Directors serve in the following positions of your organization? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Officer, director, trustee, key employee, or partner;</li> <li>• Member (if your organization is a limited liability corporation); and/or</li> <li>• Shareholder (if your organization is a professional corporation).</li> </ul>		

STEP 3: COMMENTS (Explain any "yes" answers checked above. Attach additional pages as necessary.)

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## STEP 4: NOTICE OF TNC CODE OF CONDUCT &amp; SIGNATURES

TNC expects itself and everyone with whom it does business to conduct themselves in ways that are consistent with TNC's Code of Conduct found at [www.nature.org/codeofconduct](http://www.nature.org/codeofconduct). Anyone (whether a part of TNC or not) may contact the TNC Helpline (anonymously, if desired) with questions, concerns, or suspected violations at [www.nature.org/tnc Helpline](http://www.nature.org/tnc Helpline).

The undersigned certifies the information in the inquiry form is true and correct to the best of their knowledge.

Signature:	
Printed Name:	
Title (if for an organization):	
Address:	
Date of Signature:	

## TNC COVERED PERSONS

The following are individuals who are currently or have been, during the preceding five (5) fiscal years, a TNC "Key Employee" or a member of the Board of Directors of TNC or one of its U.S. Related Entities.

## List Current as of December 15, 2025

Current Key Employees/ Officers	Former Key Employees/ Officers	Current Board of Directors	Prior Board Members
Nathalie Augustin David Banks James Bond Neel Broker Matt Brown Jan Glendening Tom Neises Asha Shah	James Asp Hans Birle William Ginn Wisla Heneghan Brian McPeek Bola Olusanya Hugh Possingham Michael Sweeney Leonard Williams	James Attwood, Jr. John Bernstein Stuart Brown Suzan Craig Dunand Michelle DePass William Frist Harry Hagey Margaret Hamburg Fred Hu Shirley Ann Jackson Sally Jewell Nancy Knowlton Edwin Macharia Jennifer Morris Roshni Nadar Malhotra Douglas Petno Sergio Rial Fawn Sharp Anna Skoglund Kent J. Thiry Kevin Weil Margaret C. Whitman	Amy Batchelor Shona L. Brown Laurence Fink Joseph H. Gleberman Andrew Liveris Jack Ma Claudia Madrazo Craig McCaw Ana M. Parma Vincent Ryan Rajiv Shah Brenda Shapiro Thomas J. Tierney Moses Tsang Frances A. Ulmer Ying Wu

TNC [Related Entity](#) Covered Persons (If applicable)

Key Employees (members of Related Entity leadership team):	Current Fiduciary Board Members, if applicable: