

**Prairie Fork Conservation Area  
Call for Proposals  
November 2023  
For funding in calendar year 2024**

Prairie Fork Conservation Area (PFCA), managed by the Missouri Department of Conservation, is located in Callaway County approximately 40 minutes east of Columbia, Missouri. The management area is just over 900 acres. PFCA is located within the oak-hickory forest/prairie transition zone of the central U.S. Approximately 70% of PFCA is restored prairie. PFCA was a working farm until the early 1990's. Over the past two decades extensive prairie and woodland natural community restoration has been undertaken. Natural community restoration and management is ongoing, and includes native plant seeding, prescribed burning, forest thinning and invasive species control. The current landscape consists primarily of prairie and woodlands.

The long-term goals on PFCA include reestablishment and maintenance of natural biological communities and service as an outdoor laboratory that advances science and engages students in active learning. Particular focus is placed on on-site youth education programs.

To achieve the above listed goals, the Prairie Fork Charitable Endowment Trust was established. The focus of the Trust is to support research and education programs that advance knowledge of natural community restoration and expand opportunities for conservation education. Competitive funding is awarded on an annual basis to projects that reflect *innovative programs of research and teaching in the areas of natural history and conservation* at Prairie Fork. More information about PFCA can be found at the following website:

[www.prairiefork.org](http://www.prairiefork.org)

The Trust is administered by two trustees, one representing the University of Missouri School of Natural Resources and one representing the Missouri Department of Conservation. Trustees are advised by a Coordinating Committee consisting of faculty from The School of Natural Resources at the University of Missouri, research and management staff from the Missouri Department of Conservation and an ecological scientist outside the University of Missouri.

**Use of Funds**

Grants from the Trust will be used to support faculty and student research and education programs as well as land management practices on the PFCA. Research supported is either conducted on-site or has closely established relevance to Prairie Fork programs. Projects may emphasize hands-on conservation education; restoration of prairie and woodland communities; evaluation of land management practices; conservation biology; or other relevant aspects of natural resources conservation. The involvement of students from diverse disciplines in the development and delivery of projects is strongly encouraged.

**Project Eligibility**

Projects must advance the long-term educational goals and management objectives of Prairie Fork. Each proposal must contain a statement that indicates how the project will contribute to the long-term goals of the PFCA. The specific products that will result from the project should be clearly indicated. Projects may address the emphasis areas outlined below; **however we also encourage innovative research outside of these focal areas.**

### **Funding**

Proposals can request **any level of funding** but most projects that receive support request less than \$10,000 annually. **Projects that leverage the use of other grant funds to meet objectives receive stronger support than those funded completely through the Prairie Fork Trust.** The Trust does not pay indirect costs. Funding is on a calendar-year basis. Project proposals may cover more than one calendar year; however, awards will be granted annually based on suitable progress. Project budgets for multiple years should be itemized by year. Funding request can include support for graduate and or undergraduate students. Prairie Fork grants may also cover page charges for publications. Please do not include page charges in the project budget. They will be paid upon request once charges have been billed.

### **Progress Reports and Publications**

A required annual progress report is to be submitted to the PFCA Trustee Eric Kurzejeski ([kurzejeskie@missouri.edu](mailto:kurzejeskie@missouri.edu)), by December 31 each year of the project. **Continued funding of multiple year projects is contingent upon timely receipt of the progress report.** A final report is due June 1 following the year of project completion. Copies of publications resulting from supported research are requested as are archival data.

### **Time-frame**

To receive consideration, proposals must conform to categories included in the attached application. Submit an **electronic copy** of your proposal no later than **January 15, 2024, to:** Eric Kurzejeski at [kurzejeskie@missouri.edu](mailto:kurzejeskie@missouri.edu). Awards will be announced on or about **March 1, 2024.**

**For additional information contact Eric Kurzejeski at  
[kurzejeskie@missouri.edu](mailto:kurzejeskie@missouri.edu)**

### **Prairie Fork Research Emphasis Areas:**

The Coordinating Committee has identified research priorities. Preference will be given to proposals that address one or more of the following areas. However, we do encourage and consider innovative research outside of these focal areas:

1. Outreach to underserved and diverse audiences about native plants and natural resource conservation.
2. The control and management of exotic plant species presents an overwhelming annual workload on PFCA. Assessment of efficacy of methods for control is desired.
3. Soil characteristics, soil biogeochemistry and soil microbiology associated with the ecological restoration of prairie and woodland natural communities.
4. Hydrologic and water quality processes in restored natural communities.
5. Techniques to suppress the growth of warm-season grasses in order to encourage forb development within existing prairies.
6. Occurrence and distribution of prairie associated fauna, especially invertebrates.

7. Restoration and ecology of prairie associated vertebrates and invertebrates.
8. Assessment of the efficacy of conservation education programs and strategies.
9. Techniques to enhance the restoration and/or propagation of conservative prairie forbs and other plants important to pollinators in restored prairies.

## **Prairie Fork Conservation Area Project Application Instructions**

1. Project Title
2. Project Principle Investigator
3. Institution and/or Affiliation
4. Relationship of the proposal to the long-term goals of PFCA and/or to current project emphasis areas.
5. Project description. All proposals must follow the general format as follows:
  - A. Title of project
  - B. Principle investigator
  - C. Team members
  - D. Statement of overall and specific objectives (include hypothesis to be tested)
  - E. Justification (description of specific problem, why information is needed, state of knowledge on topic).
  - F. Expected benefits and outcomes
    - a. Significance of the project to research or creative activity in the specific field, and its potential value in enhancing the mission of PFCA
  - G. Background and rationale
    - a. Include any preliminary work/results, and previous PFCA research
  - H. Methods should be thorough. **The Review Committee must be able to clearly understand project design and why, how, when and where data will be collected.** Proposal must include, but is not limited to the following:
    - a. Project objectives and experimental design
    - b. Procedures proposed to accomplish the objectives
    - c. Analytical procedures
  - I. Budget (equipment, personnel, travel expenses, etc.)
    - a. Conference travel is permitted to one professional meeting if presenting information associated with the project. Information about the conference, costs and location must be included (i.e. detailed travel budget).
  - J. Other funding
    - a. Plans for future support for this or closely related projects; specifically, state how PFCA support will increase your potential to obtain additional funding.
  - K. Schedule and duration (all PI's of approved projects must post a schedule of activities on the PFCA website. Use the reservation form found at [www.prairiefork.org](http://www.prairiefork.org))
  - L. Information transfer (anticipated publications and/or other information dissemination).
  - M. If applicable include a list of previous research funded by PFCA, and associated products.

## **Proposal Formatting**

Beginning with page 1, each page must be consecutively numbered. The proposal should be brief, yet consistent with critical peer review. The proposal **must not exceed 10 pages excluding citations**. The proposal must be **double-spaced** (3 lines per inch); and **may not exceed 15 characters per inch**. The proposal should have 1-inch margins. The references may be single-spaced. If images/graphics are inserted into your proposal, convert to JPEG files before inserting.

## **Literature Cited/References**

A maximum of two pages is allowed for the literature cited as it relates to this project. Include full titles.

## **Budget Section and Justification**

A detailed budget and justification must be included with descriptive titles and names, if available. Specify salaries and fringe benefits (as appropriate). Indicate each item of equipment with detailed cost breakdown, categorize supplies (e.g., glassware, equipment, instruments), list costs associated with travel, computer software, etc. Travel costs are allowed, and largely limited, to visiting research sites or collaboration on the project. Round all budget items to the nearest dollar. Proposed budget allocations to co-applicants must be specified. If project is collaborative (i.e. multi-campus), budget items must be specified in the budget justification section. Please do not include page-costs for publications. These will be handled through administrative funds when publications are accepted and an invoice is received.

Proposals that do not meet the requirements above will not be reviewed.

Please submit an electronic copy of your proposal no later than **January 15, 2024 to:** Eric Kurzejeski at [kurzejeskie@missouri.edu](mailto:kurzejeskie@missouri.edu)

## Prairie Fork Proposal Review Criteria

Prairie Fork Proposal Review Criteria include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Project / Activity Title:
2. Researcher(s) and Institutional Affiliation(s):
3. Specific Criteria:
  - a. Clear objectives and/or testable hypothesis?
    - i. Is the relationship to the PFCA mission clear?
  - b. Are the methods for achieving the proposed project objectives clear?
    - i. Are the methods scientifically sound and is an efficient experimental design utilized?
    - ii. Is the design practical and efficient for on-site implementation?
    - iii. How are the components of the project to be implemented?
      1. Personnel?
      2. Equipment?
    - iv. Clear and relevant literature cited?
  - c. Budget
    - i. Relevant expenses/activities for PFCA projects?
    - ii. Are expenses clearly stated (purpose, absolute costs)?
  - d. Results of previous research/activities
4. Strengths:
5. Weaknesses:
6. Final Recommendation(s):