

## **J. E. WEAVER COMPETITIVE GRANTS PROGRAM REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS 2019**

The Nebraska Chapter of The Nature Conservancy will award up to five, \$1,000 grants in support of graduate student research that enhances our understanding of Great Plains species or ecosystems and their conservation. Grant funds may be used to cover expenses related directly to the research project – including travel associated with data collection or to present results at a professional conference. Proposals funded will be technically sound and directly applicable to our conservation priorities in the Great Plains. Grants are offered to regularly enrolled graduate students, and they are based on scientific merit rather than need. Grant funds cannot be awarded to any institutions.

### **Eligible project categories:**

- Grassland, wetland, and/or woodland ecology and restoration
- Great Plains migratory bird conservation and management
- Invasive species management
- Social science related to grassland conservation

### **Projects that meet the following objectives/questions for 2019 will be given particular priority:**

- What factors influence ecological resilience and/or resistance to invasive species in grasslands?
- How is habitat loss and prairie fragmentation impacting plant and insect species?
- What are the most effective and efficient strategies for eastern red cedar control, based on tree heights, densities, soil types, topography, etc.? (Development of a management decision model.)
- What are the important factors (tree density, age class, slope, aspect, etc.) that determine impacts from wildfire in Great Plains woodlands populated by eastern red cedar and/or Ponderosa pine? How do those factors influence recovery of woodland and herbaceous plant communities?
- What are the impacts of tree encroachment and subsequent tree removal on plant communities?
- What management and restoration techniques benefit pollinator communities?
- Does prairie restoration serve to effectively defragment ecological landscapes?
- How do various fire and/or grazing regimes affect species, communities, and ecosystems?

**Proposals should** have a cover page, no more than three pages of narrative (not including lit cited), a one-page budget, and two supporting letters (one from the Graduate Advisor). Proposals will be judged on clarity of writing, quality of project design and applicability of the project to priorities of the Weaver program. See the attached blank scoring sheet for more guidance. *Please note that reviewers will consist of a mix of scientists and non-scientists, so please keep your language and writing readable for a wide audience.*

**Cover Page:** Title, Author, Institution, Address, Date Submitted, Graduate Advisor, Non-Technical Abstract (one paragraph)

**Narrative (3 pages maximum):** Significance of Proposed Work, Objectives, Methods, Design & Analysis, Expected Products, (single space/12 point type, Times New Roman font, 1 inch margins)

**Literature Cited Section (1 page maximum):** A sampling of the literature most pertinent to your subject.

**Budget (1 page):** The expected use(s) of the \$1,000 award, and how it supplements other sources of support.

**Two Letters of Support (1 page each):** (one from the Graduate Advisor) Please include **with the proposal.**

Successful applicants will agree to include the following acknowledgement in all publications and presentations resulting from research supported under this program. "The Nature Conservancy provided partial support for this work through the Nebraska Chapter's J.E. Weaver Competitive Grants Program."

**Send a digital copy of proposal. All documents must be in either MS Word or as a PDF. Send to:** Ms. Mardell Jasnowski ([mjasnowski@tnc.org](mailto:mjasnowski@tnc.org))

**Application Deadline is February 8, 2019    Award recipients will be notified in March, 2019**

**Scoring Sheet – J.E. Weaver Competitive Grants Program  
2019**

**Proposal Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Points:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ELIGIBILITY**

\_\_\_\_\_ Does the proposed research fit within the eligible categories of the Weaver Grants Program? (yes/no)

If yes, continue to scoring below:

**SCORING**

**(100 Total Points Possible)**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Total Points**

- \_\_\_\_\_ **1. How much will the results of this research improve conservation effectiveness in the Great Plains? (0-20 points)**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **2. How strongly does the proposed research relate to one or more of this year's top Priorities? (0-15 points)**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **3. How much is the applicant coordinating/collaborating with staff from The Nature Conservancy on the proposed project? (encouraged but not required) (0-15 points)**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **4. How clearly is the proposal written? Are ideas clearly expressed? Does the writer avoid or explain technical jargon? (0-20 points)**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **5. How much does the student's enthusiasm for the project come through in the writing of the proposal? (0-10 points)**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **6. How well-designed is the research project? Does the project stand a good chance of publication in a peer-reviewed scientific journal? (0-20 points)**

(Note to reviewers – if you feel unable to judge the research design of projects, just skip that category for all proposals and do your final ranking of proposals based on the a possible total of 80 points rather than 100.)