



FOR NONPROFIT PARTNERS

The *Walk for the Wild* event program provides a platform for Refuges and their nonprofit partners to get people moving in nature, nationally and locally, and help generate important funding to support for the NWRS and its nonprofit partners during [National Wildlife Refuge Week](#).

Below, you will find the Rules and Regulations for participating Teams for the *Walk for the Wild* event in 2023. These Rules and Regulations are subject to changes and updates. The latest Rules and Regulations can be found on the “[Participating Nonprofits](#)” website and accepted Teams will be notified of changes directly.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE (NONPROFITS)

[Apply to be a participating nonprofit](#) *Walk for the Wild* Team. A *Walk for the Wild* Team comprises of one nonprofit and its affiliated NWRS field station(s).

Participating *Walk for the Wild* Teams (pending application & approval) are required to plan, execute and promote their *Walk for the Wild* event. Using the provided *Walk for the Wild* online event platform, participating nonprofit partners will administer *Walk for the Wild* Team pages that will allow participants to sign-up for their respective events and activate supporters to donate in support of their team.

Team Expectations

- Teams will need to designate a Team Leader from the nonprofit partner (see info below on the roles and responsibilities of the Team Leader) to act as the main point of contact for their Team.
- Teams will submit an application that shows they meet eligibility requirements and details their rough event plan as well as establishes a fundraising goal for the Team.
 - Setting a fundraising goal is for planning purposes. Although we encourage you to set a realistic goal, not achieving your goal won't result in any penalties.
- A representative from the Team (ideally the Team Leader) must participate in a *Walk for the Wild* orientation training.
- Teams must commit to providing content for their team page on the main *Walk for the Wild* website (training and resources will be provided by PLA) by the published deadline.
- Teams will be expected to activate their local members, supporters and visitors to participate in their local *Walk for the Wild* activities and to fundraise on behalf of their Team.
- Teams will conduct outreach to promote the *Walk for the Wild* event and their Team page to encourage both participation and donations to their Team and/or the *Walk for the Wild* activation. An outreach toolkit and resources will be provided to participating Teams.



Roles and Responsibilities of the Team Leader

- Be designated on the *Walk for the Wild* Team application as primary contact to the Public Lands Alliance
- Participate (virtually) in a mandatory *Walk for the Wild* orientation (TBD date in July/August 2023)
- Communicate and respond in a timely manner with the *Walk for the Wild* planning team
- Ensure the Team's page on the *Walk for the Wild* website is populated by the deadline (August 15th)
- Conduct or manage communications to their network to promote and encourage participation in their local *Walk for the Wild* events and donations to their Team and/or the *Walk for the Wild* campaign
- Lead or participate in onsite or virtual event planning and execution in collaboration with volunteers/staff of their team's nonprofit organization and field site (your event planning team).
- The Team leader will be granted access to the Team's *Walk for the Wild* online platform page and donor lists and is responsible for relaying information related to the platform and lists to the rest of the Team.

* If there is a need to change the Team Leader, the Public Lands Alliance needs to be notified in writing of this change.

NONPROFIT ELIGIBILITY AND APPLICATION

Nonprofit partners must meet the criteria below, participate in a mandatory kick-off orientation meeting, and submit a completed application.

Applications to participate as an eligible nonprofit will be accepted from January 31 – June 30, 2023. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis and notification of acceptance will be issued within one week of application submission, contingent on receipt of the online acknowledgement form from your field station's Refuge Manager and/or Project Liaison.

Applications are reviewed by the *Walk for the Wild* Core Planning Team, and organizations must be approved in order to participate and fundraise as part of *Walk for the Wild*. Each nonprofit organization participant must meet the following requirements:

- Be a nonprofit organization with a board of directors, bylaws, and a 501(c)3 tax designation.
 - Proof of 501(c)3 designation will be required in the application.
- Be an organization that is actively working with a National Wildlife Refuge, field station or complex.
- Either have an official Friends Partnership Agreement or an alternative agreement with a direct tie to or cooperative agreement with an NWRS field station.
 - Only one organization per field station will be approved to participate, and those with the most direct tie to the field station will be chosen to represent that field station.
 - One nonprofit organization is allowed to represent multiple field stations. However, each field station may only work with one nonprofit.



- Organizations with an official Friends Agreement are NOT required to update their Friends Agreement as part of their participation in *Walk for the Wild*.
- A commitment to host an event and/or activities during National Wildlife Refuge Week October 7 – 14, 2023, led by your organization and in collaboration with (or at least with approval from) your partner Refuge, to set a fundraising goal for your participating organization, and engage in event and prospective donor outreach using the provided outreach toolkit (to be distributed in August 2022).
 - You will be required to declare the type of event you will host and your fundraising goal in your application, along with a quick summary of your event, and show your USFWS project leaders' acknowledgement of this event and plan.
 - Certain acceptations to the dates of your National Wildlife Refuge Week events will be considered on a case-by-case basis. See Rules and Regulations below for more details.
 - Setting a fundraising goal is for planning purposes. Although we encourage teams to set a realistic goal and we hope you reach it, not achieving set goal won't result in any penalties.
- Designate a Team Leader for your nonprofit/field station partnership as the main point of contact and to ensure the team is fulfilling the requirements of their participation.
- Have a representative participate in a virtual orientation prior to the external event platform launch. Participation is **mandatory** in order to participate and receive grants as part of *Walk for the Wild* 2023.
- A commitment to use funds generated via *Walk for the Wild* to benefit a NWRS related program or project or partner organization.
 - Organizations with an official Friends agreement may use funds raised for unrestricted purposes to support their mission as long as that is declared in the application.
 - Nonprofit organizations without an official Friends agreement will need to use funds raised to support a project or program they work on in collaboration with their partner Refuge, ideally the program or project designated in their agreement with the field site.
 - Any anticipated use of these funds raised through the event will need to be declared in the application process and reported back to the Walk for the Wild Core Planning team via reports.
 - A mid-term report indicating the use or intended use of funds raised through *Walk for the Wild* will be due in April 2024, and all funds must be utilized and a final report submitted by November 2024. Details on grant report requirements will be provided with an upfront grant check in November 2023.
- Receipt of an Online Acknowledgement Form from a USFWS project liaison and/or Refuge Manager that acknowledges their nonprofit partner's intent to participate in *Walk for the Wild* in addition to the application.

RULES & REGS FOR PARTICIPATING NONPROFITS

Public Lands Alliance (PLA) has developed the following rules to govern participation in *Walk for the Wild* and reserves the right to verify compliance and adjust these rules as necessary.



Failure to comply may disqualify an organization from participating in *Walk for the Wild* 2023, affect future participation, and/or result in forfeiture of matching grants. All organizations are required to operate ethically and honestly with mutual respect to promote awareness and support of the comprehensive NWRS.

Funds raised and granted through *Walk for the Wild*:

- May only be used to benefit the NWRS and/or their partner organization(s).
- May not be used for political activity or lobbying.
- May not be endowed.
- May not be subsequently granted to another participating organization.
- Must be used within 12 months of receipt of grant checks or must be returned to PLA.
- All contributions received through *Walk for the Wild* are subject to PLA's variance power. PLA's Board of Directors has the power to modify or eliminate any restriction, condition, limitation, or trust imposed with respect to any funds or property the title to which has become vested in this corporation if, in the sole judgment of the Board of Directors, such restriction, condition, limitation or trust becomes unnecessary, incapable of fulfillment or inconsistent with the charitable needs of the community or area served.
- Participation in *Walk for the Wild* does not guarantee organizations will receive funds. Organizations will receive *Walk for the Wild* funds upon the contingency that they raise funds allocated to the respective nonprofit team. In the case that a participating team does not raise any funds, they will not receive funds through the Amplifier grant or otherwise.
- If your team intends to raise \$25,000 or more, you will be required to submit a Fundraising Agreement with your Project Liaison and/or Refuge Manager in accordance with USFWS policies and procedures. A *Walk for the Wild* application is not a substitute and/or does not override the need for a Fundraising Agreement.

Events hosted as part of *Walk for the Wild*:

- A qualifying event can either be an in-person and on-site event at the Refuge, an in-person but off-site event that promotes your Refuge and organization, a self-guided event on the Refuge, or an exclusively virtual event where you lead and recruit participants and donors to *Walk for the Wild* in their local community in support of your site/organization.
- It is the responsibility of the nonprofit organization to ensure their *Walk for the Wild* event is planned in accordance with existing USFWS policies and procedures. Participating nonprofit organizations may need to acquire a Special Use Permit (SUP), modify an existing SUP, or provide other event documentation with their field station in order to host a *Walk for the Wild* event. A *Walk for the Wild* application is not a substitute for / nor does it override the need for an SUP or other documentation required by your field station in order to hold an event.
- *Walk for the Wild* events must occur during National Wildlife Refuge week, the second week of October. Exceptions to the dates of your National Wildlife Refuge Week event will be evaluated and approved by



the Public Lands Alliance on a case-by-case basis if proposed in writing to the Core Planning Team, ideally in your application.

- Event type can be modified from what was submitted in the application but must be finalized by August 15 in accordance with the deadline to add basic event information to the Walk for the Wild website.
- More details on the qualifying events and communication expectations can be found below.

DONATIONS DURING WALK FOR THE WILD

The Walk for the Wild event was designated as an opportunity to raise unrestricted and/or program funds for nonprofit partners of National Wildlife Refuges while activating outdoor recreation on National Wildlife Refuges. Teams are comprised of both a nonprofit partner and a Refuge, and the event model was designed purposefully to allow Refuge's to participate in event planning and execution and so nonprofit partners can fundraise using an off-site platform. Therefore, fundraising should be an important component of your Team's participating.

Donations made through *Walk for the Wild* are administered by the Public Lands Alliance (PLA), the official national strategic fundraising, friendraising, and marketing partner to the National Wildlife Refuge System. All donor receipts will be issued to donors by the Public Lands Alliance.

Walk for the Wild donations will be accepted September 1 – Oct. 20, 2023 at 5pm ET.

The online portal for contributions will close on October 20, 2023 at 5pm ET. Contributions received by mail or other mechanisms after this time will returned/refunded.

- Participating nonprofit organizations are responsible for soliciting donations on their team's behalf. Contributions must be 100% tax-deductible (no goods or services exchanged).
- Participating organizations should not provide tax receipts for contributions made through *Walk for the Wild*. Donations are made to the Public Lands Alliance, which provides all tax receipts. Organizations are encouraged to acknowledge contributions otherwise as appropriate.
- Eligible contributions include:
 - Credit card gifts made online via the *Walk for the Wild* online platform.
 - Checks, donor-advised funds and corporate matching grants, made out to and mailed to the Public Lands Alliance/*Walk for the Wild* that specify the nonprofit team or Amplifier Fund allocation and received by the October 20 deadline.
- Ineligible contributions include gifts in exchange for goods or services including, but not limited to:
 - Event Proceeds – including funds raised by a participating organization through raffles, drawing auctions, or other events
 - Fees – including admission, registration, tickets, or any type of non-tax-deductible payment
 - Membership dues
 - Tuition
 - Pledge payments (gifts cannot be made to fulfill legally binding pledge agreements)



- Participating nonprofit organizations are restricted from soliciting and collecting donations for *Walk for the Wild* during onsite events and on National Wildlife Refuges in accordance with USFWS policies and procedures and [Friends Policy](#).
 - If your event or registration table is off-site of your field station, you may solicit and promote the opportunity to make donations online.
- All donations made by check must be made during the giving timeframe, made out to the Public Lands Alliance (PLA), indicate the team's name in the notes and mailed in time to be received by October 20, 2023 to: PLA – Attn: WFTW, 1835 7th St NW, #242, Washington, DC 20001.

WALK FOR THE WILD DONATION/GRANT REPORTS & DISTRIBUTION

- PLA provides donation information to participating organizations via reports on a set frequency or as requested. The contact person for approved organizations will be set up with an account to access the *Walk for the Wild* event platform (powered by Classy) and to receive donation reports.
- Donation reports include donor names, email addresses, and gift amounts that donors provide. Donors will have the ability to remain anonymous, in which case Team's will not be provided the donor information, and the donation will be designated as "anonymous".
- Event registration reports can be accessed online by the team leaders who have an event platform account, however donation reports are not yet available on the platform and will be provided directly to the team leader via email.
- PLA only provides *Walk for the Wild* event platform access to an organization's contact person.
- Grants (total amount of funds raised + share of matching grant funds from the PLA "Amplifier Fund") will be distributed to organizations via an upfront lump sum check following the close of giving period during the month of November 2023.

OUTREACH, MARKETING & LOGOS

Walk for the Wild Teams are expected to promote *Walk for the Wild* and the opportunities to participate in their event, either in-person or virtually, and donate.

- Outreach efforts ideally will include social media posts, newsletter articles, and direct emails to their network. but other outreach methods are encouraged.
 - The Walk for the Wild Team, through evaluation, found that Teams who had diverse outreach methods had the most success in attracting participants and supporters.
- A *Walk for the Wild* toolkit will be provided to participating nonprofit organizations with sample language to use and other resources to aid in creating communications and promotion for *Walk for the Wild*.

To promote cohesive event marketing and help donors associate organizations with the matching grant opportunity, PLA and NWRS will provide the *Walk for the Wild* logo suite to each organization's contact person



after applications are approved and access is granted to the event platform. They may be used in black and white or color from the time organizations are given access through the end of the giving window. Do not alter the logo; preserve original colors and always position it upright.

Acceptable references in marketing materials: Walk for the Wild; Walk for the Wild 2023; Walk for the Wild 5k Challenge.

In their promotional materials, organizations are requested to include the following:

- Organizations receive 100% of gifts designated to them and partial matching grants from the *Walk for the Wild* Amplifier Fund.

The *Walk for the Wild* toolkit will include additional guidance and will be provided in July-August 2023.

Organizations and Refuges are not allowed to use the Walk for the Wild marketing or logos for other events not formally approved by the Walk for the Wild Planning Team via the formal application process or otherwise.

ELIGIBLE WALK FOR THE WILD EVENTS

- All participating teams must host an eligible event during National Wildlife Refuge Week (October 7-14, 2023) to move a distance of 3.1 miles in nature.
 - An eligible event should activate participants to move in nature and optionally donate to support the participating nonprofit Walk for the Wild Team.
 - Events should be free to participate.
 - The purpose of the event is to move a distance of 3.1 miles (5K) in nature.
 - Participants will always have the option to walk or move in their own community to benefit a *Walk for the Wild* Team, but Teams must also host an eligible event in addition to this virtual opportunity for participants to more deeply connect with the Team they are supporting.
 - If the Team chooses to exclusively host a virtual event, the Team must provide an experience or interpretive element to engage their participants virtually during *Walk for the Wild* 2023.
- Eligible Event Models Include:
 - **On-Site, In-Person, Coordinated Event**
 - An organized walking event with a set start and end time
 - Staff and volunteers would be required to welcome and guide participants
 - Small festival style event with activities and benefits for attending (either an isolated event, or part of a series or existing activity for National Wildlife Refuge Week)
 - Examples of benefits/activities: swag, food trucks, educational workshops, performances.



- **On-Site Self-Guided Event**
 - A designated and mapped out course at a field station
 - Walkers are provided direction on how to participate and achieve the challenge.
 - A way to engage participants through interpretation or communication
 - Examples: a place to pick-up event swag, a poster for people a sign, selfie-station, interpretation along the course, costume contest, photo contest, scavenger hunt.
 - Happens during the course of National Wildlife Refuge week, either on designated days or completed throughout the full week.
- **Off-Site Coordinated or Self-Guided Event**
 - Same models as on-site options above, but held at a different location than the field station the walkers are supporting or indoors.
 - This model is intended for Field Stations that are closed to the public, difficult to access, or have poor weather conditions for a walking event in October.
- **Exclusively Virtual Event**
 - Encourages participants to walk in their own community or location of their choice but they designate a team to support during their commitment.
 - Encourages participants to post photos of their movement or engage in a digital community.
 - Teams provide participants moving on their behalf with an experience or interpretive element to enhance their connect with the field site they are supporting.
 - Examples: interpretive or guided podcast for their 3.1-mile walk, a soundtrack of sounds from the field site, field site thematic scavenger hunt.

QUESTIONS

For more information on *Walk for the Wild* and the application form, please visit:

<https://www.publiclandsalliance.org/americaswildliferefuges/walk-for-the-wild/participating-nonprofits>

For questions, or clarifications, or for more information please contact:

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