

Nonprofit Recovery Grant : Entry # 2330**General Information****Date or application:**

01/05/2024

Organization Name

Northeastern Cave Conservancy, Inc.

Organization TIN or EIN:

13-4043653

Organization physical address:

222 Sheldon Road
Delanson, NY 12053
United States

[Map It](#)**Is the mailing address different from the physical address?**

Yes

Organization mailing address (if different):

P.O. Box 254
Schoharie, NY 12157
United States

[Map It](#)**Contact Information****Primary contact name:**

Leslie Hatfield

Primary contact title:

President

Primary contact phone:

518-258-6961

Primary contact email:l.hatfield@necaveconservancy.org

Preferred method of contact:

Email

Website (if available):<https://www.necaveconservancy.org>**Organization Info and Structure:****Please attach to this application proof of your organization's Tax-Exempt Status**

- [IRSNCC26032.pdf](#)

Date of establishment:

12/11/1978

Give a brief description of your organization. Please include information on the organization's activities or mission statement (150 words or less):

The Northeastern Cave Conservancy, Inc. (NCC) is a not-for-profit corporation committed to the conservation, study, management, and acquisition of caves and karst areas having significant geological, hydrological, biological, recreational, historical, or aesthetic features.

To these ends, the NCC combines the resources and expertise of affiliated cave explorers, educators, scientists, landowners, and conservation officials. Currently the NCC has 12 preserves with 21 known caves in 6 New York counties, with 5 preserves with 7 caves located in Albany County.

The NCC programs are focused mainly on the preservation of caves and karst. Outreach includes education in schools and local communities, establishment of park spaces on karstlands, and educational messages about the significance of groundwater pollution on this sensitive underground ecosystem.

Provide the total number of part time employees (if applicable):

0

Provide the total number of full-time employees (if applicable):

0

Provide the total number of volunteers (if applicable):

36

What is the organization's current annual budget?

\$24,085.00

Have you or the organization ever received any form of COVID-19 relief funds or loans specific to the negative impacts of the Pandemic?

No

Describe the purpose of the organization. Include a description of the target population, as well as the goals and objectives of your proposed project and the amount of Albany County residents that are served (250 words or less).

The Northeastern Cave Conservancy is a unique land trust that specializes in conservation, study, management and acquisition of caves and karst areas. Karst is a type of landform caused by the dissolving of the underlying bedrock. Features common to karst include caves, springs, sinkholes, disappearing streams, and enlarged rock joints. Cave and karst preservation appeals to a diverse group of people for an equally diverse set of reasons. Researchers are typically interested in our bat populations or geologic and climatic history of the rock layers containing the caves. Outing clubs and summer camps use our properties as an introduction to caving, with our Clarksville Cave ranking the most visited wild cave in the northeast. Families use our properties for surface walks and caving trips. Our cave preserves are appealing to both cavers and non-cavers alike. Our caves have something to offer the novice caver with Clarksville Cave positioned as a park and go cave preserve whereas, some of our caves require vertical skills appealing to the more advanced cavers. Several of our Albany County preserves require permits for either safety reasons or to prevent overcrowding in the caves. It's hard to quantify how many Albany County residents are served by our properties. All of our caves are open to the public allowing any Albany County resident the possibility of surface hikes, underground exploration, as well as volunteer opportunities with cave/preserve clean up days or trail construction.

If an award is made, describe how Albany County stakeholders will benefit.

Awarded funds will be used to make upgrades to our preserves located in Albany County so Albany County residents will benefit first hand to these upgrades. At our Albany County preserves, the information kiosks and changing areas will be repaired/rebuilt as needed, posters and maps will be updated. Signage will be purchased and installed for our new surface Geologic Interpretive Trail at our Clarksville Preserve. Funds may be used to improve the parking area at the Alan Traino Preserve. Our Knox Preserve is undergoing the removal of an aging, dilapidated staircase and the installation, by volunteer labor, of ~70 timber box steps, providing safer access to Knox Cave. Funds will be used as needed to assist with purchasing materials for the Knox trail upgrade. All of these improvements will benefit Albany County residents visiting our preserves. Volunteers with the Knox Access Trail will be trained to construct timber box steps, a skill that they can carry forward with future volunteer work at other nature preserves.

Negative Economic Impact:**What amount of funding is being requested?**

\$12,540.00

Provide the total amount of lost revenue/additional expenses attributable to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Looking at 2019 and 2022 numbers, lost revenue for the 2020 and 2021 calendar years is approximated conservatively at \$12,540. Yearly intake from auctions/donations is generally ~\$1,770. During 2020 and 2021, this value was zero dollars. Our organization had an event canceled, due to the COVID19 Pandemic, that would have generated ~ \$9,000 in revenue. We also had an ~ 22% reduction in membership revenue.

Many of our expenses are for upgrades and maintenance to our preserves. We actually had a reduction in expenses because our volunteer work force, following CDC and NYS guidelines, did not participate in in-person, organized work days at our preserves. Other expenditures involve attending non-profit industry related conferences, which were also canceled due to the

Pandemic. The preserve maintenance related expenses did not go away, rather they were pushed into the 2022, 2023 and beyond budget years.

Sustainable Operating Model: Describe how your organization adapted its operations to respond to (a) the immediate impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and (b) any long-term trends brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Following CDC guidelines, immediate impacts on our organization was a stoppage of all group work days to conduct annual maintenance at our preserves, all in-person fundraising events/opportunities, and our annual member appreciation day. Visitation to our preserves dropped dramatically, taking years, still working on the full to return to pre-COVID numbers. All quarterly Executive Committee and Board meetings were held remotely. Long term trends brought about by COVID-19 are the continuation of a remote option for attendance at meetings as well as a more robust online fundraising effort as well as membership appeal.

If an award is made, describe how the funds will help the organization to recover from the negative economic impacts associated with the COVID-19 pandemic and to sustain long-term operations in Albany County.

As a 100% volunteer organization that receives its funding from membership dues, donations, fundraising activities, and the occasional grant, the ARPA funds will help position the NCC to move forward with projects that were delayed during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Recouping some of the lost funds will allow us to move forward without working from a deficit.

Does the organization possess a financial management system that provides records that can identify the sources and application of ARPA funds if an award is made? Please explain below:

Yes. Our organization uses QuickBooks Online. Each of our Preserves has a budget line and any preserve specific expenditures are tracked back to a specific preserve, i.e., kiosk repairs, signage, or trail upgrades. Any money awarded would be allocated, by line item, to ONLY our preserves located in Albany County, and tracked accordingly.

Please explain how the negative impact associated with the COVID-19 pandemic led to revenue loss:

During the 2020 and 2021 years of the Pandemic, we lost out on all in-person fundraising opportunities, ~\$1770/year. Pre-COVID-19, the NCC held an annual Old-Time Barn Dance fundraiser event in the Octagon Barn in Knox, the dances were canceled in 2020 and 2021. The Conservancy also participates in spring and fall, 3-day, in person, NRO events (Northeast Regional Organization of the National Speleological Society), all canceled for two years, where we raise funds through donations and auctions. We were also scheduled to host a spring NRO which was canceled due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, resulting in a loss of ~\$9,000 that would have been generated by registration fees and food sales. There was also an ~ 22% reduction in income from membership dues, indicating membership numbers dropped during the 2020 and 2021 COVID-19 years. Our annual Member Appreciation Day, usually held in Clarksville, or at Thacher Park, was canceled in 2020 and 2021. In-person events provide opportunity for networking and generally result in an increase in membership, all lost without the opportunity for attendance at in-person events.

(Optional) Use the below space, or attached supplemental files, to provide any additional information that you believe will support the organization's request:

The Northeastern Cave Conservancy, Inc., NCC, started as a land trust in 1978 to receive the donation of Knox Cave, in the Town of Knox, from the DiLisa family. Since the Knox donation the NCC has grown to 12 preserves with 21 known caves, with five preserves in Albany County. Several of the NCC Board members are residents of Albany County. Hundreds of former Albany High students as well as students from other area high schools visited Clarksville Cave, in the Town of New Scotland, as their first foray into caving. Over the years, many area fire/ems volunteers, as well as Albany County Sherriff deputies have,

used our preserves for cave rescue training. With the ARPA funds, we can make up for lost revenue and get our preserves in tip top shape for all of our visitors.

Optional file upload

- [NCC-Preserves-in-Albany-County-NY.pdf](#)

Tax Information

Please upload Federal tax returns for tax year 2019

- [NCC2019f990ez.pdf](#)

Please upload Federal tax returns for tax year 2020

- [NCC2020f990ez.pdf](#)

Please upload Federal tax returns for tax year 2021

- [NCC-f990ez-2021.pdf](#)

Please upload Federal tax returns for tax year 2022

- [NCC2022f990ez.pdf](#)

Please upload IRS Form W-9

- [NCC-ARPA-W-9.pdf](#)

Risk Assessment

Has the organization adopted and/or implemented policies relating to: records retention, conflict of interest, code of ethics, and/or nondiscrimination policies

Yes

If you selected "Yes" above, please specify:

Our Board completes conflict of interest forms annually and as potential conflicts arise. Currently our records are stored as hard copies in our office. As part of our five-year plan, we are looking to: move document storage to the cloud; discuss both a code of ethics for our Board members and determine a need for and implement, if warranted, a nondiscrimination policy.

Is the organization properly insured?

Yes

If you selected "Yes" above, please specify the types of insurance held and the limits:

Property - \$25,000; General Liability - \$2,000,000 aggregate, \$1,000,000 per occurrence; Crime - \$10,000; Directors and Officers - \$3,000,000; Employment Practices Liability - \$3,000,000; Volunteer Accident - \$75,000 for accidental death and dismemberment, \$25,000 for primary accident medical expense, \$1,500,000 per accident; Conservation Defense Liability Insurance - \$500,000

Does the organization have a financial management system?

Yes

If you selected "Yes" above, please specify

Our organization uses QuickBooks Online.

Has there been any change in your organization's key staffing positions in the last 2 years?

Yes

If you selected "Yes" above, please specify


Both the President and Secretary reached term limits in December of 2023, positions were filled by the Board at the December 2023 meeting. Both the President, Leslie Hatfield, and the Secretary, Ramon Armon left their Trustee positions to assume their new roles. Two Trustees were appointed to replace them with one being Mitch Berger who moved from the Secretary position to that of a Trustee and the other position was filled by John Dunham, a life member of the Conservancy. In June of 2023, Erik Nieman was elected by the membership to be a Trustee after a Trustee moved out of the area and did not seek re-election.

Has the organization previously done work for the Federal government (i.e. Is the entity experienced in managing Federal funds)?

No

Certifications:


Acknowledgment 1

 I have read and understand the U.S. Treasury's Compliance and Reporting Guidance for State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (see link below)

U.S. Treasury's Compliance and Reporting Guidance for State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds:

<https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/SLFRF-Compliance-and-Reporting-Guidance.pdf>

Acknowledgment 2

 Should the County allocate ARPA Funds, I am able to and pledge to adhere to ALL Compliance and Reporting Requirements of the U.S. Treasury as it relates to any State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds

Acknowledgment 3

✓ I understand the County will contact me if/when additional information is needed and that information will be promptly provided to the County to support reporting requirements

Acknowledgment 4

✓ If for any reason I am unable to comply with the U.S. Treasury's Compliance and Reporting Requirements I will immediately notify the County in writing by email or letter

Acknowledgment 5

✓ All information submitted in this application is true and accurate

Electronic Signature Agreement

✓ I agree

By checking the "I agree" box, you agree and acknowledge that 1) your application will not be signed in the sense of a traditional paper document, 2) by signing in this alternate manner, you authorize your electronic signature to be valid and binding upon you to the same force and effect as a handwritten signature, and 3) you may still be required to provide a traditional signature at a later date.

Type name

Leslie Hatfield

Notes**Admin Notification (ID: 655253b8f18ee)**

added January 5, 2024 at 9:01 pm

WordPress successfully passed the notification email to the sending server.