



**GORDIAN KNOT STRATEGIES**  
Trust Us To Unlock Your Impact



TRARO



**U.S. Endowment**  
for Forestry and Communities



# Case Study

## Over \$8 Million Directed to Forest Projects using TRARO® Screening

### ABOUT

The Innovative Finance for National Forests (IFNF) Program, launched in 2019 is co-managed by the Forest Service (FS) and the U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities. IFNF provides impact grants for projects that strengthen the resilience of the National Forest System. It supports the design and implementation of innovative finance models that mobilize public and private capital beyond annual FS appropriations while delivering returns.

Gordian Knot Strategies has been a major asset to the Innovative Finance for National Forests program as they have a unique ability to provide both granular level support and strategic big-picture thinking. They created an analytical framework for standardized project screening, provided technical expertise to selected projects, and uncovered opportunities and challenges for the program as a whole. Their ability to provide industry-wide insights and produce sharp, professional outputs is commendable. GKS has been a trusted partner through nearly every stage of the program and is a joy to work with.

– **Sophie Beavin,**  
Conservation Finance  
Program Coordinator  
Forest Service

Every applicant received a tailored TRARO® Scorecard with actionable feedback.

### THE CHALLENGE

The IFNF Program needed a way to consistently assess, compare, and support field capacity building. It encouraged the use of emerging finance structures, ensuring they delivered real ecological, social, and financial outcomes. The program awardees required ongoing technical support to advance their models, learn across funding rounds, and achieve impact.

### OUR SOLUTION

Gordian Knot Strategies served as Technical Advisor to the IFNF Program across multiple funding rounds, using the TRARO® impact screening framework to evaluate projects in one of these three categories:



Following screening and selection of awardees, GKS provided structured feedback on project progress during quarterly check-in calls. This helped refine selection criteria and guidance so lessons from early funding rounds informed stronger proposals in subsequent cohorts.

### THE IMPACT

	2020	2021-2022	2023	2024
<b>ROUND 1</b>	<b>ROUND 2</b>	<b>ROUND 3</b>	<b>ROUND 4</b>	
\$1.8 MILLION	\$2.2 MILLION	\$2.2 MILLION	\$2.2 MILLION	
10 PROJECTS	11 PROJECTS	11 PROJECTS	9 PROJECTS	

**5**

YEARS

LENGTH OF ENGAGEMENT

**36**

TRARO®  
SCORECARDS

DELIVERABLES

**4**

QUARTERLY  
CALLS ANNUALLY

- PROJECT SCREENING & SELECTION
- PROGRAM EVALUATION
- LEADERSHIP RETREAT

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