

2015 Virginia Watershed Roundtable Support

Request for Applications (RFA)

Source of Funding: Federal Clean Water Act Section 319(h) Nonpoint Source Implementation Grant and Section 117 Chesapeake Bay Implementation Grant (CBIG)

Issued By:

Virginia Department of Environmental Quality

Email: npsgrants@deq.virginia.gov

Division of Water, Office of Watershed Programs and Office of Ecology and Infrastructure

Physical Address: 629 East Main Street Richmond, VA 23219

<http://www.deq.virginia.gov/Programs/Water/CleanWaterFinancingAssistance/NonpointSourceFunding.aspx>

Timeline

- September 26, 2014 Issue request for applications
- October 6, 2014 Question and Answer Webinar: 11:00AM-12:30PM.
Webinar Registration: <https://www3.gotomeeting.com/register/219071838>
- November 9, 2014 at 11:59 pm Deadline for submitting applications
- November 21, 2014 Target date for Notice of Intent to Award to be issued
- January 1, 2015 Target date to begin executing project agreements
- December 31, 2015 Target completion date for all project awards

A. PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

EPA Strategic Plan Goal: Protecting America's Waters

EPA Strategic Plan Objective: Protect and Restore Watersheds and Aquatic Ecosystems.

The purpose of this Request for Applications (RFA) is to solicit applications from Watershed Roundtable organizations for projects that promote watershed stewardship and local and Chesapeake Bay TMDL implementation. Watershed Roundtables are designed to bring together local stakeholders who have a vested interest in their communities and concern about local water quality, thus filling an important role in statewide efforts to improve local water quality and restore the Chesapeake Bay. Proposed activities should foster partnerships and strengthen communication among community organizations, local entities and/or state agencies. Additionally, projects should promote watershed protection and restoration initiatives, provide education and outreach opportunities to stakeholders, support pollution reduction activities, and/or strengthen on-going implementation of TMDL Implementation Plans. For a complete list of eligible activities, please see section C.

Expected outcomes or results should include:

- Protection and restoration of watersheds and aquatic ecosystems, and the improvement of local water quality;
- Communication and interaction with key stakeholders to address nonpoint source pollution;

- Increased sign-up and participation in BMP installation;
- Targeted education and outreach initiatives to improve water quality in TMDL implementation watersheds aimed at increasing BMP implementation

Applications received in response to this RFA will be considered for funding for a 1-year grant beginning January 1, 2015 and ending December 31, 2015. Funding will be awarded to eligible organizations through a competitive negotiation process that evaluates the potential of each organization and project to effectively achieve the desired outcomes. Applicants with grants are expected to develop proposals that do not overlap with existing agreements.

B. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Soil and water conservation districts, local governments (cities, counties, etc.), planning district and/or regional commissions that are operating or serving as a local or regional watershed organization and/or watershed roundtable are considered eligible to apply.

C. ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

Through this RFA, DEQ intends to award funding for the support of Watershed Roundtable activities that lead to a positive impact on the water quality of the rivers, lakes, estuaries and bays of the Commonwealth of Virginia. All activities must address nonpoint source pollution prevention, watershed health and community engagement in local TMDL implementation and/or Chesapeake Bay TMDL implementation. See section D for restriction of funds.

- **Administrative Support (limit of 40% of grant request)**
 - Steering Committee Meetings (maximum \$150/meeting)
 - Business and administrative information should be posted for transparency (e.g. bylaws, strategic plans, and minutes).
 - Website Hosting & Maintenance (maximum of \$100/month, plus annual fee up to \$100/year, for a total of \$1300). Groups should update website content on a quarterly basis.
 - The focus of effort should be on creating content and events specific to watershed that reflect the Commonwealth priorities for water quality and watershed health and local watershed cleanup goals.
 - The website should be active throughout the extent of the grant agreement. If the site is under development, a specific timeline for development and launch should be included in the application. Groups should strive to maintain and update Information related to their watershed on a quarterly basis.
 - Relevant business and administrative information should be posted for transparency. Examples include but are not limited to: bylaws, strategic plans, list of board members, minutes, presentations, newsletters, annual reports, and contact info.
 - Information regarding current projects and initiatives should also be included.
 - Connections to general content, other agencies, resources, reports, etc. should be accomplished via URL links rather than duplication of information (e.g. other RTs, grants and funding opportunities, general homeowner tips, statewide events).

- Office supplies and equipment usage (maximum \$600/year)
 - Collaborative project development (develop grant proposals or initiatives for NPS restoration and protection activities)
 - Increased membership or executive board capacity and future sustainability
 - Roundtable or watershed organization coordinator or facilitator
 - Roundtable/watershed organization membership sustainability
 - Indirect costs are only allowable if the given organization has a federally approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (which must be provided). Grant funding for indirect costs will be capped at a rate of 10% of the proposal budget, the difference, up to the approved rate may be used as match.
- **Education, Outreach and Engagement Projects**
 - Large watershed educational events: forums, workshops, conference, regional networks or other programs (e.g. “Watershed Awareness Day”, “Regional Watershed Conference”, etc.)
 - Events and programs should focus on local watershed cleanup, restoration and protection goals and targets. For roundtables within the Chesapeake Bay watershed, connections should be made to TMDL nutrient and sediment reduction goals that will benefit from local actions.
 - Event must demonstrate active participation of a large number of individuals from many interest groups.
 - Annual stakeholder meetings (workshop, forum or other event with stakeholder engagement and participation)
 - Allowable expenses include: postage, speakers travel/fee, printing & copying materials, refreshments/breaks if it meets Food and Refreshment Policy described in Section D).
 - Agenda should include a report on Bay TMDL WIP and/or watershed prioritization at DEQ
 - Special reports or outreach tools regarding watershed health and restoration (e.g. Healthy Waters study)
 - Develop strategic plan or long-term organization plan for watershed conservation
 - Social media initiatives and electronic media outreach to increase stakeholder awareness
 - Signage for watershed protection or education
 - **Citizen Water Quality Monitoring**
 - Development of a water quality monitoring (WQM) plan
 - Develop and maintain an EPA/DEQ approved Quality Assurance Project Plan, QAPP (this is required of any program receiving WQM funding)
 - Implementation of a volunteer water quality monitoring plan that will provide consistent and verifiable data
 - Purchasing of authorized supplies to implement an approved WQ monitoring plan and QAPP
 - Training of volunteers to collect data
 - Development of ‘trainers’ certified by DEQ that can train volunteers in WQM data collection.

- **Nonpoint Source Pollution Prevention or Restoration Projects (minimum of 30% of award request) – must provide information on BMP installation and pollution reduction calculations for practices implemented using grant or match funds.**
 - Pet waste (bag/collection stations, composters/digesters, education programs, etc.)
 - Watershed restoration activities: stream restoration, rain gardens, rain barrels, riparian buffer plantings, turf to trees plantings, riparian buffer maintenance activities, soil testing
 - Low impact development demonstrations (e.g. pervious pavers)
 - Mapping of stormwater infrastructure and BMP prioritization for local governments
 - Measurement of practice changes by stakeholders/program attendees to quantify/characterize pollution reductions (i.e. through behavioral changes or before/after awareness questionnaire)

D. INELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

- Lobbying. Grant funds may not be used for litigation against Virginia or the United States or for participating in various forms of lobbying. If successful, applicants must certify that they are compliant with Title 40 CFR Part 34, New Restrictions on Lobbying as well abide with respective OMB Circular (A-21, A-87 or A-122).
- Outreach specifically delivered as K-12 education. However, participation by children or schools in water quality monitoring, or as volunteers in buffer and/or tree planting or other restoration projects is acceptable.
- Food and Refreshments. Grant funds shall not be used for food/refreshments at activities/events (e.g. meetings, workshops, training, field days or conferences, etc.) unless the objectives of the event would be compromised if food/refreshments were not provided. Costs for food and refreshments shall be at or below the Commonwealth of Virginia or local per diem rates (as applicable) for the event location. Generally refreshments for routine meetings will not be covered. Food and refreshments (and light meals) will be allowed if an event (training, workshop, extended meeting, etc.) is determined to be a “qualifying” event.

The criteria to be used to determine whether an event qualifies and providing food/refreshments is reasonable and appropriate shall include:

- The length of the Event lasts at least 4 hours; and
- At least one of the following:
 - It is impractical for participants to obtain lunch on their own (due to isolation, distance to restaurants or their office);
 - It can be documented that physical attendance of all participants is essential;
 - It can be documented that participants are working during the normal meal time as stated on an agenda (e.g. working lunch or dinner) and no other opportunity for a meal will be provided.

Proposals that include funding for food or refreshments for a qualifying event must provide the following information for each event.

1. An estimated budget and description for the light refreshments, meals, and/or beverages to be served at the event(s);
2. A description of the purpose, agenda, location, length and timing for the event; and

3. An estimated number of participants in the event and a description of their roles.
4. Justification: Federal EPA policy prohibits the use of EPA funds for receptions, banquets and similar activities that take place after normal business hours unless the recipient has provided a justification that has been expressly approved by DEQ.

Note: U.S. General Services Administration regulations define light refreshments for morning, afternoon or evening breaks to include, but not be limited to, coffee, tea, milk, juice, soft drinks, donuts, bagels, fruit, pretzels, cookies, chips, or muffins. (41 CFR 301-74.11)

E. REPORTING AND QUALITY ASSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

Progress will be reported quarterly to DEQ through a variety of reporting formats. For example a narrative summary of accomplishments that relates to the scope of service and key milestones (Form A) is required. Quarterly reports will also include a financial narrative (including personnel time tracking, if applicable), a financial reporting form/invoice (Form B), and a milestone table (Form C). If the approved scope of work includes the implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs), data regarding their installation and completion must be submitted on a quarterly basis (Form D).

If the approved scope of service requires the implementation of a Quality Assurance/Quality Control Project Plan (QA/QC or QAPP), this document must be submitted within 60 days of the effective date of the grant contract. If the approved scope of service includes the implementation of BMPs, an Operations and Maintenance (O&M) plan for each BMP must be submitted within 60 days of the effective date of the grant contract.

Examples of terms and conditions and reporting forms can be found on DEQ's website: http://deq.virginia.gov/Portals/0/DEQ/Water/NonpointSource/NPS_Grants_Resources.pdf

F. AVAILABLE FUNDING

Funding is available statewide for award and distribution of watershed organization and NPS grants. The award range for projects is a minimum of \$5,000 and a maximum of \$10,000. DEQ intends to fund quality applications across the Commonwealth such that many watersheds in Virginia will benefit from the collective effort of the watershed organizations. To this end, DEQ encourages partnerships among organizations within a given watershed.

The Department of Environmental Quality reserves the right to determine the final grant awards, in order to maximize the cost-effectiveness of grant funds awarded and support the maximum number of applicants with priority projects. Accordingly, the amount requested by the applicant may not equal the amount of the final grant award.

G. APPLICATION PACKAGE REQUIREMENTS, PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

The application package includes several required components. All required elements must be submitted in order for the application to be considered for review, and no additional information will be considered in the evaluation.

REQUIRED APPLICATION DOCUMENTS:

- Completed 2015 Watershed Roundtable Application Form (Located on the DEQ website: <http://www.deq.virginia.gov/Programs/Water/CleanWaterFinancingAssistance/NonpointSourceFunding.aspx>)
- Copy of organizational charter and organizational structure describing roll or work serving as watershed organization. A link to appropriate website describing organizational structure and purpose is acceptable. The link(s) or submittal should address the following information needs:
 - Charter and purpose statement for the organization
 - List of representative organizations or stakeholders making up membership or a list of board of directors representatives (or steering committee members)
- Copy of Federal Indirect Cost Rate Agreement if grant funds are requested for Indirect Costs.

In order to be considered for selection for this 2015 Watershed Roundtable Support RFA, applicants are required to submit (via E-mail or CD-ROM) **an electronic version** (Microsoft Word or Adobe Acrobat PDF files are preferred) of the completed Project Application to the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality **by 11:59 pm on Sunday, November 9, 2014**. Incomplete applications and those that are not delivered or mailed as specified above will be disqualified.

Email application packages to: npsgrants@deq.virginia.gov

Please use the email subject line: 2015 Watershed RFA_<insert name of applicant>

If mailing a CD-ROM or paper application it must be received by the date listed above (not post-marked). Items received after November 9, 2014 will not be included in the review process. Please address the final application package to:

Nicole Sandberg, Watershed Programs
Division of Water
Virginia Department of Environmental Quality
PO Box 1105, Richmond VA 23218-1105
629 E. Main Street Richmond, VA 23219-2405 (UPS/FedEx only)

H. DEQ CONTACTS

General questions regarding this request for applications, and the grant application process and questions specifically about roundtables in non-Chesapeake Bay Watershed areas of the state should be directed to NPS Grant Manager, Nicole Sandberg, nicole.sandberg@deq.virginia.gov, (804) 698-4043. Questions regarding Roundtables located within the Chesapeake Bay should be directed to Lara Kling, lara.kling@deq.virginia.gov, (804) 698-4002.

Specific questions regarding regional watershed organization activities should be directed to the identified Nonpoint Source Coordinator or regional contact person for each of the DEQ Regional Offices:

- **Piedmont Regional Office:** Margaret.Smigo@deq.virginia.gov, (804) 527-5124, Margaret Smigo; the Piedmont Regional Office serves the counties of Amelia, Brunswick, Charles City, Chesterfield, Dinwiddie, Essex, Gloucester, Goochland, Greensville, Hanover, Henrico, King and Queen, King William, Lancaster, Mathews, Middlesex, New Kent, Northumberland, Powhatan, Prince George, Richmond, Surry, Sussex and Westmoreland; and the cities of Colonial Heights, Emporia, Hopewell, Petersburg and Richmond.
- **Tidewater Regional Office:** Dana.Gonzalez@deq.virginia.gov, (757) 518-2137, Dana Gonzalez; the Tidewater Regional Office serves the counties of Accomack, Isle of Wight, James City, Northampton, Southampton and York; and the cities of Chesapeake, Franklin, Hampton, Newport News, Norfolk, Poquoson, Portsmouth, Suffolk, Virginia Beach and Williamsburg.
- **Northern Regional Office:** May.Sligh@deq.virginia.gov, (804) 450-3802, May Sligh; the Northern Regional Office serves the counties of Arlington, Caroline, Culpeper, Fairfax, Fauquier, King George, Loudoun, Louisa, Madison, Orange, Prince William, Rappahannock, Spotsylvania and Stafford; and the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, Falls Church, Fredericksburg, Manassas and Manassas Park.
- **Valley Regional Office:** Nesha.Mcrae@deq.virginia.gov, (540) 574-7850, Nesha McRae; the Valley Regional Office serves the counties of Albemarle, Augusta, Bath, Clarke, Fluvanna, Frederick, Greene, Highland, Nelson, Page, Rockbridge, Rockingham, Shenandoah and Warren; and the cities of Buena Vista, Charlottesville, Harrisonburg, Lexington, Staunton, Waynesboro and Winchester.
- **Blue Ridge Regional Office:** Greg.Anderson@deq.virginia.gov, (540) 562-6871, Greg Anderson; the Blue Ridge Regional Offices serve the counties of Alleghany, Amherst, Appomattox, Bedford, Botetourt, Buckingham, Campbell, Charlotte, Craig, Cumberland, Floyd, Franklin, Giles, Halifax, Henry, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Montgomery, Nottoway, Patrick, Pittsylvania, Prince Edward, Pulaski, and Roanoke; and the cities of Bedford, Clifton Forge, Danville, Covington, Lynchburg, Martinsville, Radford, Roanoke and Salem.
- **Southwest Regional Office:** Chris.Burcher@deq.virginia.gov, (276) 676-4803, Chris Burcher; the Southwest Regional Office serves the counties of Bland, Buchanan, Carroll, Dickenson, Grayson, Lee, Russell, Scott, Smyth, Tazewell, Washington, Wise and Wythe; and the cities of Bristol, Galax and Norton.

I. RESOURCES AND OTHER INFORMATION

To assist in the development of proposals for this solicitation, resources related to grant proposal development and grant project management are provided.

http://deq.virginia.gov/Portals/0/DEQ/Water/NonpointSource/NPS_Grants_Resources.pdf

This includes:

- Guide to Budget Categories for proposal development
- Examples of Contract terms and conditions and reporting forms used for DEQ grant contracts issued by 319H, CBIT and CBRAP Funding
- Summary of useful web resources for NPS Grant projects

J. EVALUATION AND AWARD CRITERIA

Projects will be scored based on the evaluation criteria listed below in order to prioritize projects for the distribution of available funds. A team of DEQ staff will evaluate grant applications and proposed projects. All projects approved for funding through this RFA will be announced on DEQ's website.

Evaluation Criteria	Maximum points
Project Information, Activity Description and Timeline: The applicant provides sufficient detail on project activities to evaluate the capacity of project sponsor to complete proposed activities. The proposed timeline and milestones are realistic for the grant period. Acquisition of necessary permits, authorizations, and approvals are accounted for in the timeline	30
Outcomes (Education and Outreach, Watershed Stewardship, etc): The education and outreach activities and/or watershed stewardship BMPs and activities described in the application support existing or well-described watershed planning efforts. The applicant includes activities and events to promote watershed stewardship and improvement.	20
Outcomes (Partnership building and collaboration): The application has adequately identified key partnerships. The manner in which partners will be involved to further the achievements and accomplishments listed in the application is sufficiently detailed	20
Experience with Project Administration: The applicant has the experience and capacity to manage grants and projects and has the capability to complete all grant-related requirements. Past record of grant projects received by 319 or CBIG will be taken into account. Applicants who have had previous grants cancelled due to cause or who have had awarded grant funds reduced due to cause may experience an automatic 10 point deduction.	15
Organizational Structure and Purpose supportive of local and regional watershed restoration goals: The application demonstrates the capability of the sponsor and partners to successfully complete the project (e.g. qualifications, expertise, and role within the community).	15
BONUS - Match Funding: Match is not required for this RFA. However applications which provide and/or demonstrate an active partnership that provides appropriate match (cash or in-kind) to accomplish activities and deliverables will be credited for their efforts.	5
Evaluation Criteria Maximum Points	105