

Vermont Watershed Grants

Administration Guide

Project Year 2020

Vermont Agency of Natural Resources
Vermont Watershed Grant Program
Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department
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Use of Funds

Grant funds may *NOT* be used for:

- Work on private land where written permission has not been granted;
- Work on private land where the landowner charges a fee;
- Paid advertising and promotion;
- Payments that are in conflict with 501(c)(3) regulations, such as stipends to board members;
- Projects that are not in compliance with relevant state and federal laws and regulations;
- The purchase of heavy construction equipment (backhoe, tractor, etc.);
- Land purchases and associated costs such as appraisals; and,
- Control or inventory of nuisance aquatic or terrestrial plants.

Policy on funding publications

Funds may be used to print free publications and for start-up costs related to fee publications, excluding the direct costs of printing. Funds may not be used for revisions and reprinting of publications where there is a charge.

Pre-award expenditures

No expenditures with grant funds may be used on work completed prior to execution of the Grant Agreement. However, for projects which have been recommended for funding by the review committee, design, engineering and the ordering of supplies and materials are payable under the grant if incurred no more than 60 days prior to Project Agreement. However, the organization will only receive funds per the scheduled specified in their signed Project Agreement. No on-the-ground work may begin prior to Project Agreement.

Grant Award Process

Review of Project Applications

Completed applications are first reviewed internally by staff within the Agency of Natural Resources. Once the internal review is complete, applications will be distributed to the seven-member Citizen Review Committee for rating and ranking (incomplete or late applications will not be considered for funding). *Refer to Appendices regarding Committee roles and membership.*

Rating

Applications are rated according to the Project Review Criteria found in the Watershed Grant Application Guide.

Ranking

Based on the rating scores, projects will be ranked in descending numerical order. Projects may be funded for less than the requested amount at the discretion of the Citizen Review Committee. Recommendations for funding will then be forwarded to the F&WD Commissioner for approval.

Notification of Approval

Applicants will be notified if the project will receive funding and the amount, if approved. If any project is withdrawn, or is unable to begin by August 30, 2020, the funds may be awarded to an alternate project or re-allocated in the next funding cycle. Successful applicants will be expected to sign a Project Grant Agreement.

Grant Project Implementation

Prior to executing the project, the grantee and the State will sign a standardized Project Grant Agreement which will include but not be limited to the name of the grantee, the project period, project work plan, grant amount, and payment schedule. **An insurance certificate documenting evidence of insurance coverage at specified coverage limits and a completed W-9 form will be necessary before the grant agreement can be executed.**

Payment Schedule

Grants generally are divided into two payments: an advance payment made upon signing of the Project Grant Agreement, and the remaining balance upon receipt and approval of the Final Report. The advance payment to successful applicants will be 80% of the grant amount. Grantees will be expected to use a standardized invoice form when seeking payment. The invoice form will be provided in the Project Grant Agreement.

Grant Award Conditions

Work on Public Lands

Prior to receiving a copy of a fully executed Project Grant Agreement from the State, organizations and individuals receiving grant funding for work on public lands will be required to enter into a separate agreement with the public agency(s). A copy of this agreement shall be submitted to the Watershed Grant Program.

Work on Private Lands

Any recipient receiving approval for work on private lands must have a signed statement from each landowner that he or she understands the work that is proposed to be done and grants permission for that work on the land. A copy shall be submitted to the program.

Permits or Other Approvals

All local, state, and federal permits or other approvals that are required as a result of the activities proposed under the project must be obtained from the appropriate agencies prior to receipt of the second payment under this grant (see Appendix D). Copies shall be submitted to the program. *In the event that any necessary permits are denied, the sponsor will be required to refund any grant monies to the State within 90 days of such denial.* Refer to Appendices for permit and compliance contact lists.

Project Implementation

Project Agreement

Upon receipt of a fully executed Project Grant Agreement, the grant recipient may begin work. Costs incurred prior to the execution of the Project Grant Agreement will not be eligible for grant funding except for pre-award expenditures as outlined on page 1.

Project Period

Projects should be ready to begin before August 2020. Discuss any known, special time-table needs with the Watershed Grants Program prior to applying. The completion date for the project will be stated on the Project Agreement. Most project periods will be from signing of the Project Grant Agreement until January 31, 2021; longer project periods can be arranged. Requests for an extension of time will be considered with proper justification. Properly justified requests for extensions of the project completion date shall be granted through an Amendment. Expenses incurred after the Project Agreement expiration date will not be eligible for payment.

Project Reporting

All sponsors will be required to submit a final report in order to receive the final payment. Refer to Appendix G for more information. At a minimum, this report should include:

- How did you meet the natural, cultural and/or recreational objectives of the project?
- Quantified results;
- Identification of any difficulties encountered during project implementation and administration;
- Photographs (captioned and credited; digital copies encouraged);
- Two copies of any funded publications.

Standard Watershed Grant Timetable

1. Grant application submitted (due February 7th, 2020) followed by internal review.
2. Citizen Review Committee ranks submitted projects and makes recommendations for funding. Commissioner of Fish and Wildlife approves selected projects (February).
3. Applicants are notified of decisions (March).
4. Project Grant Agreements are drawn up between ANR and Project Sponsors (by April), specifying:
 - a. Project period, project work plan, grant amount;
 - b. Grant payment schedule; and
 - c. Any relevant conditions or requirements.
5. After signing of Project Grant Agreement and after submittal of an invoice, Project Sponsor/Grantee receives first grant payment (April-May).
6. Work begins on project (see also Pre-Award Expenditures, page 1).
7. Project is completed and Final Report is submitted (Winter, unless otherwise stated in the Project Agreement). Final Report is approved by the Watershed Grants office and final payment is made to Project Sponsor.

Purchasing and Contracts

Purchases, materials and contract for services must follow State guidelines, unless the grantee is a municipality. These guidelines are based on the total contract amount or the total cost of materials, equipment, or services to be purchased.

\$0-\$3,500	No bids are required. Verbal agreements are acceptable.*
\$3,501-\$14,999	Documentation required to show that the sponsor tried to obtain at least three written quotes.
\$15,000 and Over	Formal written bids are required. Several suppliers must be given the opportunity to bid. The written bids received must be maintained in the grant recipient's files for audit purposes.

* Multiple purchasing is not permitted for the same item. For example, purchasing \$1,000.00 worth of needed materials in two \$500.00 lots.

Record Retention

It is recommended that all program and financial records be retained by the grant recipient for official audit by the State of Vermont, or for a period of five (5) years after the final close-out date, whichever occurs first.

The following records should be maintained and made available for audit:

- Payroll register by pay period showing names, hours worked, hourly rate, benefits, deductions, gross pay and net pay;
- Final cost summary of all payroll registers;
- Time sheets signed by both employees and their respective supervisors;
- Invoices for purchased materials;
- Invoices for all design and construction costs;
- Indicate check number and date paid on each invoice;
- Canceled checks or copies thereof;
- Time & Attendance Report for Force Account Labor (if applicable); and,
- Copies of Payment Requests / Performance Reports.

Appendices

- A. Application Checklist
- B. Historic Preservation & Cultural Resources Survey
- C. Vermont Watershed Grants Citizen Review Committee
- D. Environmental Permits & Clearances & ANR Contacts
- E. Time & Attendance Report for Force Account (Employee) Labor
- F. Donated (in kind) Labor Report
- G. Contents of Final Report & Use of Program Logo

Appendix A: Application Checklist

This list is provided to help the project applicant ensure that all appropriate materials have been included with the grant application. Some applications will not require everything on this list, depending on the nature of the project. Contact the Watershed Grant office for clarification. Remember to include the appropriate materials as part of your application.

1. Completed and signed application form
2. Project time line and/or schedule of events
3. Brief outline of proposed publications, including mock-ups if available
4. Answers to Project Review Criteria questions
5. Project Budget Summary
6. Status of local, state and federal permits which have been or will be obtained
7. Status of written landowner agreements
8. Letters of Support
9. Maps, design drawings, etc.
10. Historic Preservation Survey (All applicants must submit this survey, see Appendix B).

NOTE: Once notified of being selected to receive grant funds, applicants will be expected to complete and submit a federal W-9 form and provide documentation of insurance coverage.

Appendix B: Historic Preservation and Cultural Resource Survey

This survey is required of all applicants. ANR will coordinate with the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation as needed to satisfy any historic or archaeological concerns. The answers to the questions below will help ANR understand and resolve potential historic preservation issues at the application phase so that the project, if funded, can successfully move forward.

1. Does the project involve rehabilitation, demolition, removal of or using a building or structure that is more than 50 years old? Yes No

If yes, please describe on a separate page and provide photographs of the building or structure.

2. Does the project include excavation (to any depth) within a floodplain or within 200 feet or a river or stream? Yes No

Does the project include a stream crossing? Yes No

If yes to either, please describe on a separate page including width, length, and depth of excavation. Describe the proposed ground disturbance.

3. Are there any foundations, mill ruins, historic roads, or other historic features or sites within the project area? Yes No

If yes, please describe on separate page if and how the project will impact such features or sites.

Appendix C: Vermont Watershed Grants Citizen Review Committee 2020 Guidelines and Membership

Composition. Seven-member citizen committee which represents the following interests to the fullest extent possible:

- Land planner, regional or town
- River association (large and small)
- Lake association (large and small)
- Cultural resources
- Recreation
- Fish and wildlife organizations
- Environmental groups
- State Legislature
- Land trusts
- Educational institution(s) or group(s)
- Major watershed groups such as Lake Champlain Basin Program, Connecticut River Joint Commission, etc.

Committee members are appointed by the Commissioner of the Vermont Department of Fish & Wildlife with advice from the ANR Watershed Grants Steering Team. Terms are two years and staggered, with a renew option at the end of each term. A list of the current Committee members is available upon request to the Watershed Grants office.

Qualifications. The persons who serve on the Committee should generally be knowledgeable of watersheds needs and issues. While individuals may be appointed because they have a background from a certain interest group, their position on the committee must be broadly representative of watershed issues and not unreasonably advocate for their interest. If a member has a personal interest in a specific project, he or she shall not participate in the ranking of that project.

Responsibilities.

- X Review and rank watershed project proposals using criteria provided by the Commissioner of Fish & Wildlife and the ANR Watershed Grants Steering Team;
- X Make recommendations to the Commissioner of Fish & Wildlife on the level of funding watershed projects should receive from the Conservation Plate Watershed Fund; and
- X Conduct an annual review of application forms and selection criteria and recommend changes to the Commissioner of Fish & Wildlife and the ANR Watershed Grants Steering Team.

Time Commitment. The work will involve one or two day long meetings during the course of the year to review and rank projects and possibly to review program objectives. There will also be significant hours of “homework” involved in reading grant applications and assigning points using established Project Review Criteria.

Compensation. The members will be compensated for out-of-pocket expenses including meals and travel at the Vermont State allowances. A per diem payment cannot be provided.

Staff Assistance. The ANR Watershed Grants Steering Team, comprised of representatives from the Departments of Fish & Wildlife and Environmental Conservation, will provide support to the Committee.

Appendix D: Environmental Permits & Clearances and ANR Contacts

It is the responsibility of the project sponsor to ensure that all appropriate local, state, and federal permits have been obtained. Following is a list of contact people for some of the typical permits and clearances which are likely to be needed for watershed grant-related projects.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 802-872-2893
(For projects involving wetlands and navigable waters)
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Vermont Project
8 Carmichael St., Suite 205, Essex Jct., VT 05452

State Division for Historic Preservation (D.P.) (ANR will coordinate this review.)

State Wetlands Office: 802-490-6179 / www.vtwaterquality.org/wetlands.htm
(Call or visit the website to find out which Regional Wetlands coordinator covers your county.)
Watershed Management Division
Department of Environmental Conservation,
1 National Life Drive, Main 2, Montpelier, VT 05620

Act 250 (for all projects): District Environmental Coordinator (see next page).

Stream Alterations Permit

(For projects involving stream crossing, stabilization, etc.)

Watershed Management Division:

For Central and Southeastern Vermont: Patrick Ross, Barre Regional Office 802-476-2679

Email: pat.ross@vermont.gov

For Western Vermont: Christopher Brunelle, Essex Regional Office 802-879-5631

E-Mail: chris.brunelle@vermont.gov

For Northeastern Vermont: Patrick Ross (interim), St. Johnsbury Regional Office 802-476-2679

E-Mail: pat.ross@vermont.gov

Storm Water Discharge Permit 802-490-6169

Stormwater Section, Watershed Management Division

Dept. of Environmental Cons., 1 National Life Drive, Main2, Montpelier, VT 05620

Lake and Pond Encroachment Permits 802-490-6134
Shoreland Encroachment Program, Watershed Management Division
Dept. of Environmental Cons., 1 National Life Drive, Main 2, Montpelier, VT 05620

Vermont Natural Heritage Program (ANR will coordinate this review.)

ANR District Environmental Coordinators (Act 250)

Districts #1 & 8: 802-786-5920; 440 Asa Bloomer State Office Building, Rutland, VT 05701
District #1 Coordinator: William Burke; 802-786-5923; william.burke@vermont.gov
District #8 Coordinator: Warren Foster 802-786-5922; warren.foster@vermont.gov

Districts #2 & 3: 802-885-8855; 100 Mineral Street, Suite 305, Springfield, VT 05156
District #2 Coordinator: Stephanie Gile, 802-289-0597; stephanie.gile@vermont.gov
District #3 Coordinator: Linda Matteson, 802-289-0598; linda.matteson@vermont.gov

Districts #4: 802-879-5614; 111 West Street, Essex Junction, VT 05452
District #4 Coordinators: Stephanie Monaghan; 802-879-5662; stephanie.monaghan@vermont.gov
Rachel Lomonaco; 802-879-5658; rachel.lomonaco@vermont.gov

District #5, 6 & 9: 802-476-0185; 10 Baldwin Street, Montpelier, VT 05633
District # 6 & 9 Coordinators: Susan Baird; 802-476-0134; susan.baird@vermont.gov
Josh Donabedian; 802-476-0186; joshua.donabedian@vermont.gov

District #7: 802- 751-0120; 374 Emerson Falls Rd., Suite 4, St. Johnsbury, VT 05819
Coordinator: Kirsten Sultan; 802-751-0126; Kirsten.sultan@vermont.gov

Appendix E: Time & Attendance Report for Force Account (Employee) Labor.

It is not necessary to submit this form to the Watershed Grants office as part of the Final Report. A copy should be retained in the sponsor's project files for state audit purposes.

Signature of Employee

Paid by Check #

Project Name:

Project ID #

Day/date	Work performed	To - From (time)	# Hrs.	Pay Rate	Total Paid
Sun/				\$	\$
Mon/					
Tue/					
Wed/					
Thu/					
Fri/					
Sat/					
				Total	\$

Time and Attendance Reports for *each* sponsor employee must show data for the full week (or pay period). The hours spent on the project should be specified and marked as to task performed. The reports should be signed by the employee, indicate the rate of pay, and show the check number covering the wages. Sponsor is not required to submit canceled payroll checks. If the sponsor has a computerized payroll system or signed time sheets which shows at least this much information, it may be used instead.

Appendix G: Contents of Final Report & Use of Program Logo.

Watershed Grant Final Report

The following information must be included as part of the Final Report submittal. Final reports can be submitted electronically via email to the grant program administration or a hard copy can be delivered via mail.

- 1. Project Name:**

- 2. Project Sponsor:**

- 3. Project Location & Description:**

- 4. Describe your accomplishments relative to each task in your Work Plan as contained in the Grant Agreement. Whenever possible, please include numeric values detailing project accomplishments (i. e. number of trees planted, acres of wetland restored, number of students who attended, etc.) These values are meant to facilitate DEC's Clean Water Investment reporting.**

- 5. Benefits to the watershed:**

- 6. Benefits to the community:**

- 7. Please submit 2 to 4 photographs of your project.**

- 8. Please submit copies or photographs documenting how you used the license plate logo to explain where you received support for your project.**

Watershed Grants – 2020 – Expenditures

Project name:

Grant Award #:

<i>Expense/Item</i>	<i>Grant funds</i>	<i>Other funds (cash & in-kind)</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
<i>Administrative Overhead</i>	\$	\$	\$
<i>Direct Labor</i>	\$	\$	\$
<i>Purchased Materials and Services</i>	\$	\$	\$
<i>Map, Plan or Publication Costs</i>	\$	\$	\$
<i>Other Costs</i>	\$	\$	\$
TOTALS	\$	\$	\$

Watershed Grant Logo

Grantee agrees to use the Conservation License Plate Logo in written or public materials or presentations reporting on the project as well as all publications, public events, annual reports, and permanent structures that describe or represent the work conducted under this grant shall include an acknowledgement of the Watershed Grant and the Conservation License Plate Program making use of the logo provided below:



This project was funded in part by a
Vermont Watershed Grant.

This image is available for downloading at the website: <https://dec.vermont.gov/water-investment/cwi/grants/co-opportunities>

The Vermont Agency of Natural Resources is an equal opportunity agency and offers all persons the benefit of participating in each of its programs and completing in all areas of employment regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual preference, or other non-merit factors.

This document is available upon request in large print, Braille, and audio cassette.

