CLEAN WATER INITIATIVE PROGRAM
Ecosystem Restoration Grants
SFY 2018-19

Ecosystem Restoration Grants Application Manual

Please note that this document will be updated on a regular basis. Check the date in the header to track updated versions.

For Appendices 1-4 see the Clean Water Initiative Program – Grants webpage.

General

Background and Purpose

The Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation's (DEC) Clean Water Initiative Program (CWIP) administers the Ecosystem Restoration Grants. The goal of the program is to support projects that will restore and protect Vermont's rivers, streams, lakes, ponds, and wetlands from nutrient and sediment pollution.

This manual provides guidance and examples for each section of the grant applications and each step of the grant application process. Please refer to this application manual while completing your grant application(s) and return to this manual for updates.

Application Timeline

Table 1 outlines the timeline for the Ecosystem Restoration Grants. Applicants must use the application form and may only submit one application per project to facilitate the evaluation of submitted applications.

Notification of funding will be given as soon as possible following the quarterly review dates. Projects will be expected to start within 3 months of the date of contract signing.

Table 1. Ecosystem Restoration Grant Process Timeline

Grant Round	Deadline for Batch Review	Anticipated Notification of Awards[1]
FY 2018 Round 1	July 5, 2017	July 28, 2017
FY 2018 Round 2	October 2, 2017	November 15, 2017
FY 2018 Round 3	December 15, 2017	January 29, 2018
FY 2019 Round 1	April 23, 2018	June 8, 2018

Eligibility

To be considered for a CWIP Ecosystem Restoration Grant, a project must meet eligibility requirements in each of the following categories; **Pollutant Type**, **Applicant Type**, and **Project Type**. Any applicants that believe their project may fall outside of the eligible categories listed below, must contact CWIP program staff for a determination. Please allow at least 2 weeks for a determination.

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[1] Notification dates are estimates and will be dependent on required approval by DEC and the State Treasurer's Office.

General Project Eligibility Criteria:
- Land acquisition is ineligible for funding but may be acceptable as match.
- Projects that solely address flooding problems and drainage, and do not address sediment or nutrient pollution are ineligible.
- Projects that can be funded through other sources must pursue those funds first and explain why they are applying for an Ecosystem Restoration Grant. (See Roads and Agriculture sections)
- Construction/development projects that cause negative impacts to natural resources, and require a state permit (e.g., permit for lake shoreland or stormwater, floodplain development, or wetland) may be considered ineligible for this grant. *You must identify if there are any permits required for the project before applying for an ERP grant.*
- General outreach and education is ineligible.
- Projects that are considered low priority for this grant program include: culvert and other stream crossing maintenance and upgrades, updates to existing assessments or plans and streambank erosion hazard mitigation.

1. **Pollutant Type**

The project must mitigate **Nutrient** or **Sediment** Pollution. It may address other pollutants such as bacteria or chloride but only if it is secondary to the primary pollutant (of a nutrient or sediment). For example, projects whose primary focus is flood mitigation, with no sediment or nutrient reduction, will not be eligible.

2. **Applicant Type**

An eligible applicant can apply for funding to complete a project on property owned by non-eligible entities, if the entity assumes responsibility of the operations and maintenance of the project. The funds, in this case, can only be used for project completion costs and cannot support the non-eligible entity.

Individuals, for-profit entities, and federal agencies are not eligible to receive CWIP Ecosystem Restoration funding but may partner on a proposed project with an eligible entity.

Table 2. Applicant Eligibility for CWIP Ecosystem Restoration Grants

Eligible Applicants	Ineligible Applicants
Vermont Municipality	Private Citizens, Individuals
Regional Planning Commissions	Private Colleges and Universities
Natural Resources Conservation Districts	Private For-profit Businesses and Industries
Non-profit Private Organizations	Federal Agencies
State Agencies	Programs within DEC
State Colleges and Universities	
Public Hospitals and Medical Centers	
Public Schools	
Project on Private Land Sponsored by Eligible Entity*	

Sponsored means the eligible entity assumes full legal responsibility of project, including operation and maintenance

3. Project Type

The goal of the CWIP Ecosystem Restoration grant program is to support projects that improve water quality by reducing nutrient and sediment pollution, thereby protecting or restoring natural resources such as lakes, rivers, and wetlands. Projects that do not meet this goal will be considered ineligible. Please find the list of acceptable project types with their definitions in Appendix 2.

DEC will complete an administrative review to determine if the application contains all required elements and was submitted according to grant program requirements. DEC will then conduct a technical review of all acceptable applications for eligibility. DEC will make a determination as to whether the application is eligible and consistent with the CWIP Policy goals and requirements of the respective grant program.

a. Stormwater Projects

This category includes stormwater master planning, the identification, design and implementation of stormwater management practice(s) that collect, store, infiltrate, and filter runoff that contains nutrient and sediment pollution from hard surfaces associated with developed/urban/suburban areas. This may include projects identified in an MS4 plans such as a Flow Restoration Plan (FRP) or a Phosphorous Control Plan (PCP).

When agricultural and road projects are identified as part of a Stormwater Master Plan, they are not eligible for 30% concept design funds and the plan should provide an alternate list of sources of funds for these projects.

Table 3. Stormwater Project Type Eligibility

Eligible Stormwater Project Types	
Municipal Non-Regulatory Projects	Municipally owned projects in non-MS4 communities
	Municipally sponsored[2] projects in non-MS4 communities
Municipal Regulatory Projects	MS4 owned projects identified in an MS4 plan (e.g. FRP, PCP)[1]
	Projects identified in a MS4 plan (e.g. FRP, PCP) on private land but project is sponsored by the MS4 [2]
	Municipally owned projects or projects on public lands that will be subject to the Developed Lands Permit ($\geq$3 acre of unpermitted impervious)
	Municipally-sponsored[2] projects that will be subject to the Developed Lands Permit ($\geq$3 acre of unpermitted impervious)
Nonregulatory Projects (Owned or sponsored by eligible entity)	Stormwater Master Plans, identification, planning, design and implementation of stormwater projects with an eligible applicant
Stormwater Projects on Agricultural land	See Agricultural Projects Section

1.   50 % match required if MS4 is the applicant
2.   Sponsored means the Municipality assumes full responsibility for operation and maintenance, or they are a co-permittee and agreement identifies O&M responsibility.

Table 4. Stormwater Project Type Ineligibility

Ineligible Stormwater Projects
Projects that include the addition of new and redeveloped impervious surfaces requiring an Operational Stormwater Permit [3]
Projects that cause negative impacts to natural resources or require one of the following **individual** state permits; permit for lake shoreland, floodplain development, or wetland.
Projects that CWIP deems may cause significant negative impacts to natural resources, that may not require a state permit.
Maintenance activities such as repair or maintenance of existing structural practice (including practices required by a permit)
Update of an existing assessment or plan (e.g. an older SWMP, FRP, PCP)
Privately or commercially owned land if not sponsored by eligible entity
Privately or commercially owned properties subject to the Developed Land Permits (>3-acres of unpermitted impervious)
Projects for the purpose of complying with Minimum Control Measures under the MS4 permit

b. Road Projects

This category includes municipal roads, class I through IV, that are subject to the Municipal Roads General Permit (MRGP). Projects related to municipal road repairs **should first apply for funding through** the **Grants-in-Aid program** or **VTrans Better Roads program**. If a project was denied funding from either of those programs, and they provide documentation of denial and the reasoning, they may apply for ERP funding. Note that culverts and other stream crossings are capital eligible but low priority for ERP funding.

Table 5. Road Project Eligibility

Eligible Road Projects	Ineligible Road Projects
Projects on Municipal Roads, Including Class IV, if No Other Funding is Available	Projects on Private Roads that are Not Municipally Sponsored
Projects on Private Roads if Sponsored by an Eligible Entity	Projects Dealing with Private Driveways
In-Stream Culvert Replacement Projects on Municipal Land *(Low Priority)*	Maintenance Activities such as Re-grading, Sweeping, or Catch Basin Cleaning

c. Natural Resource Restoration and Protection Projects

Natural resources restoration and protection projects are eligible if the applicant is an eligible entity. This category of natural resource projects includes all steps (assessments, identification, design, and implementation) of the following project types:

Table 6. Natural Resource Project Eligibility

Eligible Natural Resource Projects	Ineligible Natural Resource Projects
Wetland restoration projects, including mapping wetlands	Projects on private, commercial or industrial land that are not sponsored by an eligible entity
Floodplain/Stream Restoration	
River Corridor Easements	
Woody Buffer Plantings	
River Corridor Plan	
River Project Identification	
Dam Removal	
Stream Geomorphic Assessments	
Update or revisions to existing plans and assessments (e.g. river corridor plans and geomorphic assessments). (*Low Priority*)	
Lake shoreland retrofit, erosion repair using LakeWise principles	

d. Agricultural projects

Projects related to agricultural practices and equipment should first apply for funding through other state and federal funding sources. To be eligible, applicants must provide documentation that they were denied funding by another funding source or were only partially funded, as well as the reasoning for this. Agricultural projects will be lower priority for CWIP Ecosystem Restoration Grant funding.

e. Equipment Projects

This category of projects includes the purchase of stormwater/road equipment with demonstrated water quality benefit to enhance/improve the application/installation of best management practices that will reduce erosion and control nutrient and sediment pollution (e.g., high efficiency street sweepers, and vacuum (vactor) trucks/trailers, hydroseeders). Requires establishment of long-term use and maintenance plan (minimum of ten years). If more than one entity, would require the establishment of an equipment share/rental program.

Table 7. Equipment Purchase Project Eligibility

Eligible Equipment Projects	Ineligible Equipment Projects
Municipal Equipment for Larger Communities (>5,000)	Equipment for Private Use
Municipal Equipment for Smaller Communities (<5,000) if shared with 2 other towns	Equipment that is in existing use or was purchased prior to grant application
Agricultural Equipment	

f. Forestry Projects

This section refers to the identification, design and implementation of projects on forest logging road, trail, and/or stream crossing Acceptable Management Practices (AMPs) project(s) to address erosion to control nutrient and sediment pollution at prioritized locations. It also refers to Forestry equipment with a demonstrated water quality benefit, such as skidder bridges.

Forestry projects are eligible if owned or sponsored by an eligible entity. In stream-culvert replacement projects on state land are eligible, although they are a lower priority. The applicant will need to demonstrate that there is no other funding available to implement the project. Culvert projects need to show there is geomorphic compatibility.

Table 8. Forestry Project Eligibility

Eligible Forestry Projects	Ineligible Forestry Projects
Fords or stable stream crossings	Projects where there is other funding available
Erosion control and stabilization	Projects not owned or sponsored by an eligible entity
Culvert improvements *(low priority)*	Culvert replacements that do not improve geomorphology
Waterbars and turnouts	
Skidder bridges	
Tree planting	

Funding Sources

Ecosystem Restoration Grants are supported by State Capital Funds and the Clean Water Fund.

Funding Priorities

DEC uses the following criteria to drive project selection via the Ecosystem Restoration Grants:

- Tier 1 Costs: Regulatory cost of compliance with federal and state-required clean water plans, known as total maximum daily loads, or TMDLs, compliance with Act 64 of 2015, and the 2016 Combined Sewer Overflow Policy;
- Identified in the Tactical Basin Planning: The process by which DEC ensures that funds are directed to the highest merit implementation opportunities based on identification, targeting, and treatment of specific sites at greatest risk of delivering excess nutrients and sediments to surface waters.
- Pollution Reduction Potential: The estimated nutrient pollutant reduction (i.e. phosphorus or nitrogen) expected to occur through project implementation. Nutrient pollutant reduction estimates are modeled using DEC's Best Management Practice (BMP) Accounting and Tracking Tool (BATT) within the Watershed Projects Database.
- Project Readiness: The determination of a project's readiness for timely implementation, with consideration of the ability to permit the project if a permit is required, confirmation of state support, and documentation of local support for project implementation and long-term operation and maintenance.
- Budget and Cost-Effectiveness: Screening for projects that achieve maximum pollutant reduction results and environmental co-benefits, such as flood resilience and habitat function, for the lowest possible cost.
- Targets Impaired Waters: Addresses sources of water pollution in waters listed as impaired (VT DEC assessment of Vermont waters)

Projects on Private Land

Applications to construct clean water improvement projects on private land are eligible for Ecosystem Restoration Grants. Some project types are typically sited on private land, such as floodplain restoration, woody buffer restoration, and agricultural controls on farmland. However, with respect to stormwater and road-related mitigation projects, DEC places municipal project proposals at a higher priority for funding than similar projects on private property. Applicants seeking Ecosystem Restoration Funds for stormwater mitigation projects on private land or for road BMPs on private roads will need to: (a) demonstrate that the project will address a significant water quality concern; (b) ensure that the project is not for achieving compliance with a state permit or state order; and (c) include an operations and management plan for the life of the project (a minimum of 10 years). Projects on private land that have municipal support for operations and maintenance will be a higher priority.

Equipment Purchase

Equipment that enhances local BMP implementation and maintenance, such as hydroseeders or high efficiency vacuum street sweepers and vacuum (vactor) trucks or trailers are eligible for Ecosystem Restoration Funds. Larger municipalities (>5,000 persons) will be considered for individual ownership and must provide 50% match. Smaller municipalities (<5000 persons) must share the equipment with at least 2 other towns. However, the applicant may request a waiver to this requirement if circumstances do not allow for sharing equipment in a cost-effective manner. The applicant is encouraged to request this waiver with documentation prior to submission of the application.

Grant recipients will be required to submit an equipment operation and maintenance plan for approval.

Annually a total of $100,000 is available for equipment purchase projects per legislative guidance. The demonstration of continued value from this type of equipment will be crucial to the continued use of capital funds for this expense.

Funding Match Requirements

While CWIP currently does not require match (in cash or in-kind) for non-MS4 stormwater projects, the ability to provide match, through in-kind services or cash, is strongly encouraged and a factor in grant scoring criteria. The grant review process assigns up to 15 points for providing match, based on the amount of match provided equipment that is in existing use or prior purchased. The Match section under "Application Review Process Scoring Criteria" shows how points are allocated (pg 20). Percentage of project match is calculated by dividing total match funds by the total project costs (requested grant funds plus the matching funds).

Grant recipient will be required to quantify and document match which may be any combination of cash, supplies, services and loan funds (including clean water State Revolving Fund loans). Funds from other federal or state programs can be included; however, local match for those other federal and state grant programs cannot be included as match. Eligible sources of match funds are specified in Table 10, below. Note that future grant rounds may require match.

Stormwater treatment projects located within a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) community that would ultimately support the MS4 in meeting permit requirements such as Flow Restoration Plan or a Phosphorus Control Plan must provide 50% match. MS4 permittees include:

- *City of St Albans*
- *Town of St Albans*
- *City of Burlington*
- *Town of Rutland*
- *Town of Shelburne*
- *City of South Burlington*

- *Burlington International Airport (BTV)*
- *Town of Colchester*
- *Town of Essex*
- *Village of Essex Junction*
- *Town of Milton*

- *University of Vermont*
- *Town of Williston*
- *City of Winooski*
- *Vermont Agency of Transportation*

Table 10. Match Eligibility Criteria

Eligible Match	Ineligible Match
In-kind contributions such as time, labor, transportation, and other organizational costs directly related to the project	Labor and expenses for scoping prior to application submittal
Cash contributions from other funding sources	
Equipment	
Vermont pollution control grants	
Low interest loan from State Revolving Loan Funds	
Land acquisition	

Calculating Percentage of Project Match

Percentage of project match is calculated by dividing total match funds by the total project costs (requested grant funds plus the matching funds). For example: If you have a project that costs $15,000 and are requesting $10,000 of grant funds while providing $5,000 in matching funds, your match is 33%.
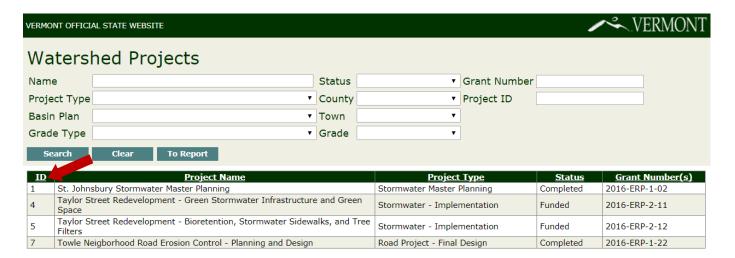
> *Total match/total project costs = percent match*

> *$5,000/$15,000 = 0.33 = 33%*

Tactical Basin Planning and the Watershed Projects Database

DEC relies on Tactical Basin Plans (TBP) to ensure that funds are directed to priority clean water improvement projects. Priority projects are listed in the TBP online implementation table, the Watershed Projects Database (WPD).

Applicants must indicate the Watershed Project Database identification number (WPD ID) on the cover page of their application. All projects can be viewed by leaving the search fields blank and selecting the "search" button.

VERMONT OFFICIAL STATE WEBSITE			VERMONT

Watershed Projects

Name		Status		Grant Number	
Project Type		County		Project ID	
Basin Plan		Town			
Grade Type		Grade			

Search	Clear	To Report

ID	Project Name	Project Type	Status	Grant Number(s)
1	St. Johnsbury Stormwater Master Planning	Stormwater Master Planning	Completed	2016-ERP-1-02
4	Taylor Street Redevelopment - Green Stormwater Infrastructure and Green Space	Stormwater - Implementation	Funded	2016-ERP-2-11
5	Taylor Street Redevelopment - Bioretention, Stormwater Sidewalks, and Tree Filters	Stormwater - Implementation	Funded	2016-ERP-2-12
7	Towle Neigborhood Road Erosion Control - Planning and Design	Road Project - Final Design	Completed	2016-ERP-1-22

The WPD identification number is listed under the first column, labeled "ID", on the page linked above.

Projects can be selected by name, project type, basin plan, status, county, town, and project identification number by using the search fields at the top of the page. If the proposed project is already in the database, verify the Project Identification Number with your Basin Planner. If the proposed project is not already in the database, contact the Basin Planner to add the project to the database and obtain the Project Identification Number before submitting an application. **Applications that do not include a Project Identification Number will not be considered for funding.** Refer to the linked map for Basin Planner contact information: http://dec.vermont.gov /sites/dec/files/wsm/mapp/docs/TBP%20Contacts%20Map.pdf).

Guidance on Application Sections

I. Cover Page

1. Project Title

A satisfactory project title includes specific information on the project type and location. It does not include acronyms.

Examples:

- Winooski Watershed Floodplain and Woody Buffer Restoration
- Swanton Village Stormwater Treatment Engineering Design
- Smith River Corridor Easement in Johnson

2. Watershed Projects Database Project Identification Number

Insert the WPD Identification number assigned to this project in the Watershed Projects Database. See section on Tactical Basin Planning and the Watershed Projects Database.

3. Project Location

Town

Indicate the town(s) where the project(s) will take place.

Watershed

Applicants must select the *waterbody identification number (WBID) watershed* (e.g., VT08-17 Dog River) where their project is located. If the project spans multiple WBID watersheds, applicants may select the *basin* where their project is located (e.g., VT08 Winooski River Basin). Basins and WBID watersheds (i.e., sub-basins) are listed in the drop-down menu by name and number. Select the appropriate one.

For further information, WBID watersheds are also available as a layer on the ANR Atlas (http://anrmaps.vermont.gov/websites/anra5/) under Watershed Protection > Waterbody Identification Number (WBID) > WBID Watersheds, however this step is not necessary to be able to respond to the question.

4. Project Type

Select the applicable project type. Refer to Appendix 2: Project Types, Definitions, and Performance Measures for a listing of project types and definitions available for funding through ecosystem restoration grant program. Each application should only have one project type.

If the project incorporates multiple engineering design and construction steps in the same application (e.g. 100% engineering design and implementation), choose the project type for most advanced project category (e.g. implementation or step closest to implementation).

If the proposed project involves more than one component, the applicant should pick the primary project type (e.g. if a project involves implementing a river corridor easement and installation of a woody buffer, the primary project type is the "River Corridor Easement – Implementation").

5. Is this proposal the next step of a previously awarded Ecosystem Restoration Grant?

If this proposal is the next step of a previously awarded Ecosystem Restoration Grant, provide the previously awarded grant number. Note the previous grant project must be completed before applying for the next step.

6. Applicant Information

Name and address of the organization applying for funding and responsible for executing terms of the grant agreement.

7. Point of Contact

Primary contact information for the person who will oversee the grant. This person will submit deliverables, as specified in the grant agreement, to the DEC Grant Manager.

8. Type of Organization

Select the appropriate category for your organization from the drop-down menu.

9. Funding Request and Project Cost

Indicate the total project cost, the amount of funding being requested, and the match amount being committed in this application. These fields should be updated after the Budget Template is complete. The totals must exactly match the totals in the budget worksheet template.

10. Project Visibility

Per Section 35a of the Vermont Legislature Capital Bill (H. 519), display of a clean water project sign in a publicly visible location during a project's construction phase may be required. Any implementation project with public visibility, as indicated in the grant application, would be considered for signage. Sign production costs are covered by the State, and do not need to be included in the project budget. Additional details are to be determined. Any sign requirements will be included in the grant agreement. If this is an implementation project, please indicate whether or not the project is visible to the public.

II. Project Eligibility Checklist

The project eligibility checklist is intended to streamline project review for natural resource conflict and project readiness. If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact the Basin Planner in your region.

1. Meets Goal of Grant Program

Indicate if the project meets the goals of DEC.

2. Required Project Support

Indicate state and local support for the proposed project.

State Support:

Applicants must discuss their proposed project(s) with the Basin Planner in your area during the preparation of their application and receive the WPD Project Identification Number. See the Tactical Basin Planning and the Watershed Projects Database section of this manual for more information on this requirement.

Local Support:

Attach as a PDF letters of support from the municipality and/or landowner for: (a) project completion, and (b) operation and maintenance over the life of the project. Both are required for implementation projects. If the project is in the preliminary or final engineering design step, the letter of support should indicate support to complete the engineering design.

3. Natural Resources or Permit Conflicts

Attach a project location map file for each project in an application using the Ecosystem Restoration Grant Screening theme layers located on the ANR Natural Resources Atlas. This theme layer is a compilation of individual layers in the ANR Natural Resources Atlas, which include ANR Basemap Data layers (Act 250 permit delineations, waterbodies, streams, parcels, and town boundaries), as well as ANR Natural Resources data layers (hydric soils, wetlands, flood hazard areas, lakeshore buffers, and river corridors). Refer to Appendix 1 for instructions on how to create the ANR Atlas Map of the project location.

The purpose of the project location map is to provide a standardized method of project review. Project location maps will be used to indicate project location(s) by latitude/longitude and will help to identify potential natural resource conflicts. Applicants should make every effort to avoid these conflicts. **If the project identifies potential conflicts, the applicant must explain in the project summary or in an attachment how the applicant has or intends to address these concerns**.

4. Timeframe of Project Start and Completion

Indicate whether the project will commence within three months of the signing of the grant contract date. DEC understands that there may be limitations to project initiation due to time of year. Consider staging your project to complete those tasks that can be addressed early as you implement your project. If your project(s) are unlikely to start within three months of the grant contract date, DEC encourages you to wait until the next grant round batch review date to submit your proposal.

Indicate whether the project will be completed within two years of its start date. Eligible projects will need to meet both conditions.

Requests for no-cost time extensions are strongly discouraged. Previously funded projects that required grant amendments to accommodate time extensions may affect future award decisions.

5. Operation and Maintenance Commitment

Indicate the party responsible for operation and maintenance of the project. All proposed projects should be planned, constructed, inspected, and maintained based on the expected life of the project.

An operation and maintenance plan assures that the project will meet its functional life. An operations plan is to include:

- A maintenance plan for each project to assure that the project will be in place and operational long enough to meet, at a minimum, its expected design life
- The entity responsible for carrying out that maintenance plan

- For equipment projects in non-MS4 communities, to file an annual statement, with DEC that certifies use and compliance with the maintenance plan.

Implementation project and equipment proposals, as detailed in Appendix 3: Standardized Milestones/Deliverables, must include a letter of commitment for project operation and maintenance. The plan will be developed and approved as part of the grant agreement.

6. Risk Assessment Questionnaire

In the application form, for project eligibility checklist item 6-a, indicate if your organization has completed a Risk Assessment Questionnaire in the last 12 months. If you have not done so within the last 12 months, complete the questionnaire and attach to the grant application. The Risk Assessment Questionnaire is available on the DEC website.

III. Project Summary (Maximum Words: 1000)

Provide a detailed description of your project(s), including:

- Source or cause of the water quality problem being addressed

- The water quality improvement project or control action being proposed

- Why this project is important in terms of magnitude of nutrient and/or sediment reduction, and should be awarded a grant

The project summary must provide thorough information regarding the problem being addressed and the water quality improvement to be gained by the project. The applicant should **not** assume that the reviewers are familiar with prior designs, discussions or municipal or river corridor plans. Where possible, the applicant should include any estimation of phosphorus or sediment reductions that are expected to result from the project. DEC expects that implementation applications with prior design (specifically stormwater) would have some quantification of benefits. The applicant should include in the project summary any discussions, reviews, or decisions that relate to potential natural resource conflicts (wetlands, river management, lakes, stormwater permits). Applications requesting implementation funds are expected to have finalized all necessary permits or have a plan for doing so in the application. **Applications that require permits and have not addressed this in the application will be returned for future grant rounds.**

IV. Grant Milestones and Deliverables

DEC has developed a standardized process for all Ecosystem Restoration Grant funded projects to ensure a consistent approach for tracking project milestones and deliverables. The standardized list can be found in Appendix 3: Standardized Milestones/Deliverables. Applicant will enter the relevant milestones and deliverables into the grant application.

Required deliverables for each project type include maps, final reports with before and after photos, and batch import files. DEC also requires a press release, issued at the *project completion,* as well as at least one additional communication/outreach method (e.g. Facebook post, poster in school or town hall, blog post submitted to DEC for the Watershed Management Division blog, webinar, etc.)

V. Grant Performance Measures

Pursuant to Act 186 (2014), DEC adopted a results-based system to ensure that Ecosystem Restoration Grants specify and record project outcomes. These outcomes, referred to as project outputs or performance measures, allow DEC to systematically track its progress in water quality improvement efforts. Performance measures are incorporated into DEC's reporting to the Environmental Protection Agency, the State Legislature, and the public on its progress in restoring Vermont's waterways.

Each project type has defined and required performance measures. See Appendix 2: Project Types, Definitions and Performance Measures for a listing of project types and associated performance measures. Select the appropriate performance measures from the drop-down menu and provide an estimated quantitative value and cost/unit for each performance measure. If you do not know the exact quantification, provide your best estimate. If the provided performance measure(s) do not accurately align with your project's outcomes, please: (a) select the required performance measure(s) and quantify the value and (b) choose an *additional* performance measure that fits your project. Add the additional performance measure as the optional performance measure 3. The required performance measures must still be chosen and quantified. The State will review performance measures for project proposals selected for funding prior to the execution of the grant agreements.

Payments will no longer be made based on performance measures. Payments will be made on a reimbursement basis. See *Budget* section below.

All grant recipients whose grant agreement includes construction are required to have posted a Clean Water Project sign, to be provided by the State and returned by the grant recipient upon construction completion.

VI. Budget

Provide the itemized budget of the project(s), including estimated labor and material costs to complete the project, by using the updated budget template on the website. The budget template includes Excel formulas to automatically calculate the total budget costs. Ecosystem Restoration Grant funds will only support expenses directly related to the project.

The budget template includes columns for the total cost of each part of the project (personnel, travel, etc.), as well as a column for the match and the application request. The total request indicated in the budget must equal the amount requested in section 1 of the application.

DEC requires applicants to secure accurate estimates for the proposal's budget, including working with contractors to secure quotes/bids during the proposal development process. The quote should be itemized and applies to any project requiring work to be contracted out. The following sample budget estimates are based on prior grant awards and provided only as estimates:

- Woody Buffer Restoration: Up to $4,500 per acre.

- Stormwater Engineering Design: Up to $12,000 per design.

- River Corridor Planning/Phase II Stream Geomorphic Assessment: Approximately $2,400 per river mile.

Any work to be contracted to a third party/project partner should be included in the "contractual" line item, while the "construction" line item should be used for contracted construction work. Please provide additional budget detail for any amounts in the contractual, construction, or "other" line items, as found in the grant application budget table, as an attachment to the application.

Beginning in SFY18, payments will be made based on invoices in conformance with performance measures. Grantees will submit invoices with actual costs that will be expected to be consistent with the budget. Grant recipients may submit multiple invoices per deliverable.

VII. Past Performance

Briefly describe other projects targeting nutrient and sediment pollution problems that your organization performed within the last three years. Describe whether the project was successful, resulted in further implementation (if an identification or design project), your history meeting reporting requirements, whether you applied for time extensions or other amendments and why, and documentation of success.

Application Review Process and Scoring Criteria

Application scoring is on a point-based system for each project type. Do not assume that the reviewers have any prior knowledge of any previous work or other information about the proposed project(s).

The evaluation and ranking of the Ecosystem Restoration Grant applications are based on the responses to the grant application questions. The Grant Review Committee will evaluate the applications using the scoring criteria outlined below.

Project Summary (45 points)

Applicant must provide a description of the project, including: (a) source or cause of the water quality problem to be addressed, (b) the water quality improvement project or control action being proposed. (c) why this project is important in terms of magnitude of nutrient and/or sediment reduction and should be awarded a grant.

Points	Qualifications
45	Description clearly and fully identifies each issue: (a) source or cause of the water quality problem to be addressed, (b) why this project is important in terms of magnitude of nutrient and/or sediment reduction and should be awarded a grant, (c) the water quality improvement project or control action being proposed (including prior designs) and (d) ensures that the project avoids impacts to natural resources (by indicating any impacts have been or will be addressed). Project addresses priorities as identified in the Application Manual.
30	Description partially identifies the issue and provides sufficient solutions to address the issue
20	Description doesn't fully identify or fully provide sufficient solutions to address the issue(s).
0	Does not provide the elements specified.

Budget (25 points)

Applicant must include a budget using the table provided in Appendix 4 which can be found at the CWIP Grant website. Each cost item must be fully explained, including: hourly rates and numbers of hours per person; number of travel miles; equipment to be used, with hourly rates; and itemized costs of supplies to be purchased.

Points	Qualifications
25	Budget is complete, includes explanations of all costs and is reasonable given the nature of the project.
15	Budget is incomplete or lacks sufficient detail however, information is adequate to support review of costs associated with the project.
5	Budget is incomplete or lacks sufficient detail for a thorough review. Project costs do not appear to be in line with project scope as detailed in the proposal.
0	Budget is incomplete, does not encompass the scope of the project and/or is not in line with expected costs.

Past Performance (15 points)

Past performance on similar projects, if applicable, is a predictor of the likelihood for successful outcomes. Applicant must indicate examples of prior water quality improvement projects implemented within the last three years (if any), whether the project was a success, how success was documented, and past performance in meeting tracking and reporting requirements, deliverables, and deadlines.

Points	Qualifications
15	Applicant clearly provided documentation of successful past performance(s). Applicant completed prior Ecosystem Restoration Grant-funded projects without any amendments.
12	Applicant indicates past performance, including whether the project was successful and how success was documented. Amendments were within the control of the recipient.
0	Applicant has no prior experience in water quality improvement project implementation.

Match (15 points)

Project proposals will receive up to 15 points for providing match, based on the amount of match provided. (MS4s are required to provide 50% match and upon adequate documentation, will receive the full 15 points.)

Points	Qualifications
15	50% match or greater
10	25 – 49% match
5	11 – 24% match
1	5 – 10% match
0	0 - 4% match

DEC Financial Operations Requirements

Grant recipients will need to agree to the State of Vermont Customary Provisions (Attachment C of the grant agreement) and submit the following additional information prior to entering into a grant agreement with the State:

1. A certificate of insurance to show that the minimum coverage is in effect (Attachment C, Section 8). Grant recipients shall name the State of Vermont and its officers and employees as an additional insured:

    a. Workers Compensation (In accordance with the laws of the State of Vermont);

    b. General Liability and Property Damage ($1,000,000 per occurrence);

    c. Automotive Liability ($500,000 combined single limit).

DEC reserves the right to rescind a grant award if required documents noted above have not been submitted.

DEC Contact Information and Application Submittal

Please direct all questions regarding the Ecosystem Restoration grants application process to David Pasco, david.pasco@vermont.gov.

Application Submittal

Applications should be submitted in electronic format to ANR.WSMDERP@vermont.gov as a PDF with separate attachments for budget and additional materials. Do not use a substitute form or alter the format of the application or the budget template. Incomplete applications will not be accepted.

<u>Reservation of State's Rights</u>:

In issuance of this RFP, the State reserves the following rights:

- To accept or reject any and all bids, in whole or in part, with or without cause in the best interest of the State;
- To waive technicalities in submissions; (A technicality is a minor deviation from the requirements of an RFP that does not impact the substantive terms of the bid/RFP and can be considered without a material impact on the RFP process, etc.).
- To make purchases outside of the awarded contracts where it is deemed in the best interest of the State; and
- To obtain clarification or additional information.

Confidentiality

After conclusion of the contracting process, Proposals are a matter of public record. If an application includes material considered by the applicant to be proprietary and confidential under 1 V.S.A., Chapter 5, the application shall clearly designate the material as such and explain why such material should be considered confidential. The Vendor must identify each page or section of the Proposal that it believes is proprietary and confidential with sufficient grounds to justify each exemption from release, including the prospective harm to the competitive position of the applicant if the identified material were to be released.

Under no circumstances shall the entire Proposal be designated as proprietary or confidential. If the Vendor marks portions of the Proposal confidential, the Vendor shall provide a redacted version of the Proposal for release to the public. Notwithstanding the above, the Secretary has an independent obligation under Vermont law to determine whether any proposal material is subject to public inspection and copying upon request, which may include material that has otherwise been designated as proprietary and confidential by the Vendor. The Vendor's designation of material as proprietary and confidential, and submission of a redacted Proposal, are provided to the Secretary for informational purposes in the event the Agency receives a public records request and will not result in withholding of materials by the Secretary unless expressly supported by Vermont law.