

**2025 Aquatic Nuisance Control Grant in Aid Program**

**Release Date: February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

**Proposals Due: 4:00 pm March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025**

**Meeting Minutes - Microsoft Teams Meeting**

**March 11th, 2025 10:00 am – 12:00 pm**

**Presented by Kim Jensen (ANC Grant in Aid Technical Service Manager) and Renee Pszyk (Grant Management Specialist)**

**Meeting Minutes:**

Kim Jensen, Aquatic Biologist and Aquatic Invasive Species Program Section Lead, Elizabeth (Lizzy) Gallagher, Aquatic Biologist, and Renee Pszyk, Grant Management Specialist. Kim welcomed the participants and provided a brief overview of the conference agenda items. Minutes will be posted to the Aquatic Invasive Species Program Grants and Opportunities webpage.

**Aquatic Invasive Species Program Overview: Kim Jensen**

The Aquatic Nuisance Control Grant in Aid Program is administered by the Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Program, information about the program can be found on the [VTDEC AIS Program webpage](#). There is extensive information on the site including: laws and regulations, statutes, permits, early detection and spread prevention efforts, VT Public Access Greeter information, how to report an invasive species, methods of control, and the information for the [Aquatic Nuisance Control \(ANC\) Grant in Aid Program](#). Please see the Application Manual for any details not covered specifically during this meeting.

Olin Reed's position, and the Aquatic Nuisance Control Permit responsibilities, have been moved to the Lakes and Ponds Permitting Team and therefore Olin will not be coordinating the Vermont Public Access Greeter Program. From this point forward, Kim Jensen will be the lead contact for this program.

Elizabeth (Lizzy) Gallagher, will be working on ANC Grant in Aid grant administration, AIS monitoring and surveying, the Vermont Invasive Patroller Program, and cyanobacteria efforts throughout the state.

Renee Pszyk, Grant Management Specialist, will be the business office lead, who will be receiving the applications, and developing the contractual agreements for the awardees.

This year, available funding for the ANC Grant in Aid program is estimated at \$850,000, similar to what was available in 2024. Funding sources include the State General Fund, a portion of annual revenues from Motorboat Registration fees, and supplemental federal funds provided by the Army Corps of Engineers. Based on advocacy work from partners in 2022, \$500,000 is available through the State General Funds, and we thank you for your continued support.

We anticipate \$500,000 will go to Greeter Program Projects, \$250,000 will go to Management Projects, and \$100,000 will go to Education, Outreach, and Survey Projects. Based on previous years, we anticipate approximately 35 applicants, and approximately 75 projects.

We anticipate the ability to fund projects in the Education, Outreach and Survey category but would like to remind all that this funding can only be used for AIS scientifically related projects. It cannot be used for other monitoring programs such as general water quality or cyanobacteria monitoring. Education, Outreach, or Survey Projects include those that assist the State in its early detection, monitoring and surveying projects, and will continue to receive funds as appropriate. Projects that might include an aquatic plant survey should not be proposed in this category but should be folded and included into a Greeter Project or a Management Project.

\*As applications are received, a confirmation notification will be sent upon receipt of the application within 48 hours, please double check that you have received this notification. If confirmation is not received, the application was not received and therefore will be considered invalid. We are unable to process applications submitted after the proposal due date. Please email Kim Jensen for technical aspects, and Renee Pszyk if you have financial questions.

**ANC Grant in Aid Process Updates: Renee Pszyk**

Due to new administrative requirements, the ANC Grant in Aid project will no longer be written as Participant Support Cost awards. The projects will be written as grant agreements, requiring additional eligibility documentation which can be found on the AIS program webpage and the [ANC Grant in Aid RFP posting on the Vermont Business Registry](#). These additional documents required for eligibility include Certificate of Insurance, DEC Risk Assessment Questionnaire, Act 154 ANR Good Standing Certification, and other documents as necessary.

<https://www.vermontbusinessregistry.com/BidPreview.aspx?BidID=64161>

Additionally, the Municipality or Regional Partner are required to be the signing authority and must make the submission for the ANC RFP, ensuring that they acknowledge their participation with the State. Lake associations may assist with developing the application. All proposals must be submitted electronically via email to Renee Pszyk at [ANR.DECGMS@vermont.gov](mailto:ANR.DECGMS@vermont.gov) by March 21, 2025, 4:00 pm EST using the subject line "2025 Aquatic Nuisance Control Grant in Aid Proposal".

### **Application Manual Overview: Kim Jensen**

Kim Jensen provided a step-by-step overview of the Vermont Aquatic Nuisance Control Grant in Aid Program 2025 Application Manual. Please see the manual for specifics. Below is a summary of topics covered in the meeting, however the manual is where all the comprehensive information can be found.

[Vermont Aquatic Nuisance Control Grant in Aid Program 2025 Application Manual Link](#)

**All required documents for the application can also be found on the Vermont Business Registry:**

<https://www.vermontbusinessregistry.com/BidPreview.aspx?BidID=64161>

### **Eligibility**

Municipalities or agencies of the state are eligible. Applicants are strongly suggested to apply through Regional Partners. No private ponds or private applicants are accepted. As in the past year, there will be only one payment instead of two, unless applicants go through a Regional Partner. Only Regional Partners will get split funding (40% in July/August, and 60% upon approval of the final report.)

### **Funding Priorities and Criteria**

First Priority: Projects designed to manage new introductions of aquatic nuisances.

Second Priority: Projects that prevent or control the spread (Ex. Greeter Programs, with first year greeter programs receiving high priority).

Third Priority: Maintenance/management projects (Ex. handpulling, bottom barriers, mechanical harvesting, herbicide projects).

Additional priorities and criteria include whether there is local interest and support, public access and recreational interests, whether there is high probability of achieving the goal, and how necessary the project is at reducing the threat of spread of the invasive species. Developmental programs get priority over long-term maintenance programs. If all the criteria are met, then an award will likely be granted.

### **Application Proposals and Reporting**

The applications are fillable forms, and we find it is best to use Adobe Acrobat to complete the application, along with avoiding Mac-based products. The application fillable forms do limit the number of words that can be included in descriptions, which

some find challenging. It's requested that applicants be concise with descriptions using bullet points if necessary, so that the Grant Management Team can read the applications quickly and thoroughly.

## **Project Category Types**

[Greeter Projects](#): Supports hiring public access greeters at access areas. These projects prevent the spread of invasive species through education, and equipment inspections designed to catch invasive species "hitching a ride" from one waterbody to another. Historically, these projects are provided 35%-40% of the total project cost. This year we hope to fund up to 75% of the total project costs (dependent on the number of applications received).

Aquatic Invasive Plant Surveys (Point Intercept Surveys) that are completed by accredited contractors should be included in this category. Funding for annual plant surveys is not a feasible request. It would be best to develop a Vermont Invasive Patroller Program for annual surveys, or to request funding after three-to-five years.

VTDEC loaner iPads are available for applicants, given the completion of the [Temporary Equipment Use Request Form](#). If applicants would rather purchase their own iPad, they can include it in their grant proposal.

Be sure to use the official access area name (if it is at a Vermont Fish and Wildlife Fishing Access Area) when filling out the Greeter Project Sheet. In the Project Budget Sheet, total Greeter hours include only hired staff and should be noted in Column A. Volunteer Greeter hours should be noted in Column B; volunteer hours can be estimated and included in the budget. Reminder that volunteer hours are required to be recorded for final reports in the case of an audit (in a spreadsheet for example but are not required to be sent in with the final report).

[Education, Outreach, and Survey Project](#): This category is specifically for scientific studies, surveys, or early detection projects that assist the AIS Program to complete its mission. (Ex. Lake Champlain Committee's study looking at the impacts of Zebra mussels on native mussels.)

Website/aquatic plant surveys do not fall under this category unless it meets the AIS Program's scientific need. Typically, educational handouts or publications are not funded as the AIS Program provides these to Greeter Projects.

[Management Projects](#): This category is for early detection rapid response projects to eradicate a new infestation, or to long term maintenance projects. Generally, high priority projects, those that are managing new introductions or new infestations, and those that manage public locations are provided with a higher score and therefore are awarded at a higher percentage than long-term management projects. Projects that

have a high budget (and may score well) are capped at \$10,000-\$15,000 depending on the number of applicants.

Aquatic Invasive Plant Surveys (Point Intercept Surveys) or long-term management plans that are completed by accredited contractors can be included in a Greeter Project or Management Project. A list of accredited contractors can be found on pages 9 & 10 from the [Resource Guide for Vermont Lake Managers](#), and by contacting Lake Associations who have made use of contractors.

Be sure to accurately describe the work that goes into the Management Project, rather than describing general information about the impacts of invasive species which is already known by the Grant Review Team. Rather speak to the details of the specific project. Also include any other local efforts (Question 3). All the questions refer to scoreable items that are considered by the Grant Review Team. These projects also are required to provide a map with information on the map about the locations included in the application that can be from the ANC Permit (please do not send a Permit Application or Report). A link to the Vermont ANR Atlas is [here](#) and an orientation video is available on the website. *(A screen shot of a Google Map marked up is ok to submit).* Greeter Projects do not need a map.

### **Invoices and Final Reports**

All invoices and final reports are required to be submitted online (or through a Municipality or the Regional Partner) rather than via email in the [ANR Online System](#).

### **Completing the Application**

In an effort to reduce paperwork, many documents are no longer necessary to submit for the application or will be for the reports. However, grantees are still required to maintain documentation for all aspects of the grant project for auditing purposes. One major category that may need attention by grantees is **documenting all non-cash contributions** including logging volunteer hours, invoices for any “service” that was donated (i.e., dock rental space, harvester hours, etc.). The documents are not necessary to submit with final reports but are required to be maintained.

### **Grant in Aid Awards**

ANC 2025 Maximum award amounts are configured based on **proposed total project costs (cash and non-cash expenses)**, and therefore it's required to complete the entire project as was proposed. If the final total project cost is reduced (by more than 10%), then the final award may be reduced. This procedure ensures grant distribution is more equitable overall. The grant notification and the grant agreement will note the maximum award amount and then will be awarded based on the **final total project costs**.

**ANC 2025 Final Awards will be based on the final total project costs (cash and non-cash expenses).** An award cannot be provided that covers non-cash expenses. For example, a maximum award amount is \$4,000 based on the proposed total project cost of \$10,000 that included \$5,000 in cash and \$5,000 in non-cash expenses. During the season, the total project costs cash expenses changed to include \$2,500 cash and \$7,500 non-cash expenses. Only \$2,500 of the award of the \$4,000 maximum award may be provided.

If applicants do more than proposed, unfortunately, they are unable to receive more than the maximum award amount.

When completing the Cover Page, it is very important applicants include all the requested information, **especially the project contact information.** Phone numbers and emails are particularly important to include as these are used for the email distribution list and to contact partners if necessary. Note, if applying through a Regional Partner, the Applicant would still be the town if the town provides any assistance to the lake association. Ex. Lake Bomoseen folks receive insurance through the town of Hubbardton so they apply as Hubbardton. Please include the official name of the access to the waterbody if there is one.

The applicant should include any municipal zoning bylaws (check with towns) as these are scored higher. Special Use Permits (SUP) are required if the Greeter Project is at a VT Fish and Wildlife Fishing Access Area (and may be required for a management project), be sure to check that box. These boxes are in section nine of the Cover Page.

If an Aquatic Nuisance Control (ANC) Permit is required for Management Projects (bottom barriers, diver operation suction harvesting, mechanical harvesting, and herbicide) applicants should already have secured or applied for an Aquatic Nuisance Control Permit and are required to meet the permit conditions. Please include the permit specifics, this enables us to make sure that your permit is up to date. The ANC Permit contact is Olin Reed, [olin.reed@vermont.gov](mailto:olin.reed@vermont.gov).

For each project, applicants need to fill out a Project Sheet (different depending on if it's a Greeter Project, Education/Outreach/Survey Project, or Management Project) AND a project Budget Sheet for each project. Please do not combine multiple projects on the Budget Sheet. This allows the Grant Review Team to fairly compare the different types of projects.

Any direct cash expenses should go into Column A (Ex. Municipal staff, Greeters, Contractors being paid to do work). Equipment and supplies (Ex. masks for Greeters, a new shed) also belongs in Column A. Anything that's non-cash should go in column B (i.e., volunteers, donated services, donated materials etc.). Totals from Column A and Column B equals Column C and Total Project Cost, which will automatically display in

the yellow cell. The maximum award amount cannot be more than the total cash expenses. The applicant should include if they're getting funds from any other sources. Cash donations do not negate the maximum award that may be provided (if reasonable) and is noted so that the Grant Management Team is aware of the capacity for the project to succeed. Please ensure that no duplicate expenses are listed if you have two Project Budget Sheets. The Total Project Cost is what the award is based on- please keep in mind these need to be realistic and reasonable costs.

Please use the suggested rates when configuring **volunteer** services rates and do not inflate rates based on prior professional experiences that are not utilized for the purposes of the project. For paid Greeters, it is encouraged to set your own rates. Ineligible expenses include things like hosting events, time taken to apply for the grant or a permit, food, fundraising, office supplies, etc. Total Fringe can include workers comp, social security, etc. Boating can be included in the mileage section. All donations and donated services are required to be documented in case of an audit.

All required materials are found on the AIS Program [Grant in Aid webpage](#) or at the [Vermont Business Registry](#). Completed applications are to be submitted (as a PDF) to [anr.decgms@vermont.gov](mailto:anr.decgms@vermont.gov). Do not email them to Kim. It's important to keep a thorough record of expenses that goes into your project, in the case of an audit.

## **2025 Aquatic Nuisance Control - Grant-In-Aid Program**

Question and Answer Period

### **Questions Submitted by Email**

- Q:** Who submits the applications?  
**A:** Applications should be submitted by the entity entering into the grant agreement with the State, which is the town or regional partner.
- Q:** Where and what is required for the certificate of insurance form?  
**A:** A certificate of insurance (COI) is a document that verifies the existence and details of an insurance policy, summarizing key information like coverage type, policy limits, and effective/expiration dates. The COI should be provided by the town or regional partner.
- Q:** Who completes the risk assessment form?  
**A:** The risk assessment questionnaire should be completed by the town/regional partner.
- Q:** Who completes the Act 154 Good Standing Certification?  
**A:** The Good Standing Certification should be completed by the town/regional partner.



5. **Q:** Can the risk assessment and Act 154 Good Standing Certification be completed online?  
**A:** The forms can be downloaded from the [AIS program webpage](#) or Bid Site then emailed with the other application pages.
6. **Q:** Where can Attachment C be found?  
**A:** Attachment C is part of the SFA - standard grant agreement template, which is an example of the grant that will be signed between the State and the town/regional partner. A copy of the standard grant agreement template is found on the bid site.
7. **Q:** Who fills out the SFA - standard grant agreement?  
**A:** Renee Pszyk fills out the standard grant agreement template. It is provided so the town/regional partner can review the terms and conditions associated with the grant agreement.
8. **Q:** Who do the applications get mailed to?  
**A:** All proposals must be submitted electronically via email to Renee Pszyk at [anr.decgms@vermont.gov](mailto:anr.decgms@vermont.gov) by March 21, 2025, 4:00 pm EST using the subject line "2025 Aquatic Nuisance Proposal".

### **Questions Submitted During Workshop**

1. **Q:** Shouldn't control (management) at access points be considered as spread prevention? Level 2 vs. level 3 awards  
**A:** Still considered management because the species is being directly managed.
2. **Q:** Do we put the Regional Partner's name on the Cover Page instead of the Town?  
**A:** If working with a Regional Partner, please include the Town name as the applicant so that the Regional Partner and DEC can track the town's where the projects are taking place. Some regional partners are administering projects (some NRCDs), and therefore, they would be the applicant.

**Clarification:** The surveys are intended for EDRR in waterbodies that do not have an existing AIS, or new infestations rather than for ongoing management, but you are encouraged to include them, and we will consider these requests.

**SUP Link Request:** <https://anrweb.vt.gov/FPR/vtFPR/SpecialLandUseLic.aspx>

3. **Q:** Does the map you include need to show just the lake or does it need to show also the greater area around the lake?  
**A:** The lake itself is fine.



4. **Q:** Shadows divers that survey our lake has been lumped into our greeter program for the past several years, should we be separating that this year? Or just do what we have done in the past several years.  
**A:** Do as in the past.
5. **Q:** Do level 1 "introductions" include new infestation areas or existing species (e.g. EWM), or only new species introduced to a waterbody?  
**A:** It refers to a new species introduced into a waterbody.
6. **Q:** Do different control methods (e.g. EWM control via DASH and benthic barriers) need different applications, or include both together?  
**A:** No, they should all the practices should be included in one Management Project Sheet application.
7. **Q:** We have historically completed II.B. and II.C. relative to our milfoil harvesting effort. Is this OK?  
**A:** Question withdrawn but clarified that the title of a project can include the harvest and survey.
8. **Q:** In the past I have received a permit from Barb McGregor. Is she still my contact?  
**A:** Yes, for SUPs via Forest, Parks and Recreation.
9. **Q:** Any specific requirement for Active lay monitor?  
**A:** No, let us know who the lay monitor is and work with Mark Mitchell.
10. **Q:** If working on milfoil harvesting is this an OK project type description?  
**A:** Yes
11. **Q:** Do we need to include VIP and Lay monitors in question #2  
**A:** Yes, include there.
12. **Q:** I've never included volunteer hours on the project sheet only in the budget sheet - is this a new requirement?  
**A:** Noting it within the narrative of the Greeter Project Sheet gives us a better summary of the work that is being done, we are able to document the blend of volunteer and paid work. However, if this makes it more complicated you may fill it out as it has historically been done.
13. **Q:** Are volunteer hours that are considered administration/coordination included in Total Greeter hours in the Greeter Project Sheet?  
**A:** No, please separate these out using the administration or coordination line item.

14. **Q:** The mileage reimbursement amount is less than the federal reimbursement for 2025 (.70). Can this be changed to reflect this?

**A:** As some have already submitted their applications, we cannot change this, however this can be adjusted in the final report.

15. **Q:** How do I indicate contractor rate is per day vs per hr. Not able to change this on form or write in a clarification note.

**A:** Note the total amount in Column A without noting the rate/hour.

16. **Q:** Also if we have 3 contractors how do we add that on the form which has just 2 spaces for contractors:

**A:** If more lines are needed for this work, use the miscellaneous category, and note "Contractor Per Day Rate" as a note to explain.

17. **Q:** Direct expenses, anticipating \$25,000 Greeter expenses, municipality may be including \$5,000 does this impact the total funding?

**A:** No, recording the amount in the line item below in the Project Budget Sheet allows us to report that there are many funding sources for these projects.

18. **Q:** If we have an estimate for an aquatic plant survey that we would like to do, should we attach that quote or just list it on the budget page - do you want the name of the company?

**A:** Keep the quote for your records, include the contractor's name in the narrative.

19. **Q:** How do we know if we need to fill out the negotiated indirect cost rate agreement form

**A:** The town or regional partner will fill this out if this is applicable.

**Clarification:** The standard agreement form is an example of what the municipality or regional partner will sign. Form 430 will be required to be signed by the Municipality or Regional Partner will be included in the grant agreement documents.

20. **Q:** Do we have dates for greeter training?

**A:** Not yet, need to hire technician before publishing dates.

21. **Q:** In the past we put Lake Champlain as the basin that we were in. The map shows Winooski as the correct basin. Going forward, should I put in Winooski?

**A:** Keep Champlain, that's the overall basin.

22. **Q:** Where is Attachment C to ensure Certificate of Insurance is made out to correct certificate holder and to review limits?

**A:** It is listed in the RFP, template found there.

23. **Q:** Can you review/clarify what documents need to be submitted by the town/municipality vs the submitter or coordinator?

**A:** Lake Association can complete the application forms, but the Municipality/Regional Partner must be the ones to submit all the required documents.