319 Nonpoint Source Final Application

FY2017 Final Applications are due Monday, September 26, 2016 by 2:00 pm

Section I: General Information

Project Title: FY2017 Education and Outreach Mini-Grants

Project Sponsor Information

Sponsor Name: Soil & Water Conservation Districts of Montana

Registered with the Secretary of State? Yes

Registered with SAM? Yes

County: Lewis & Clark

Website: www.swcdmi.org

Tax Identification #: 23-7096823

DUNS #: 137350505

Primary Contact	Signatory
Jessica Makus	Ann McCauley
Title: Programs Manager	Title: Associate Director
Address: 1101 11th Avenue	Address: 1101 11th Avenue
City: Helena State: Montana Zip Code: 59601	City: Helena State: Montana Zip Code: 50601
Phone Number: 406-443-5711	Phone Number: 406-443-5711
Fax Number: n/a	Fax Number: n/a
E-mail Address: jessica@macdnet.org	E-mail Address: ann@macdnet.org
Signature: Jessica L. Makus	Signature: Ann M. Cauley

Project Location

12 Digit HUC #(s): Statewide

(1) Waterbody Name from 2016 List of Impaired Waters: Project Specific

(1) Probable cause(s) of impairment to be addressed (ex. metals): Sediment, nutrients, metals, pathogens, and/or temperature

(2) Waterbody Name from 2016 List of Impaired Waters:

(2) Probable cause(s) of impairment to be addressed (ex. metals):

(3) Waterbody Name from 2016 List of Impaired Waters:

(3) Probable cause(s) of impairment to be addressed (ex. metals):

Activity 1 Name	NPS Education and Outreach Projects	Latitude (1)	n/a	Longitude (1)	n/a
Activity 2 Name		Latitude (2)		Longitude (2)	
Activity 3 Name		Latitude (3)		Longitude (3)	

Nonpoint Source (NPS) Information

Which WRP does the project implement? Other

What is the WRP status? DEQ-Accepted

Does the project address impairments identified in a TMDL? Yes

Waterbody Type: River/Stream

Functional Category: Watershed Management

1st Pollution Category	Agriculture (Grazing Related Sources)	Percent of Total (%)	30
2nd Pollution Category	Hydromodification (Channel Erosion/Incision)	Percent of Total (%)	20
3rd Pollution Category	Urban Runoff/Stormwater (Municipal)	Percent of Total (%)	30
4th Pollution Category	Hydromodification (Streambank or Shoreline Modification/Destabilization)	Percent of Total (%)	20

Project Funding

319 Funds Requested	$30,000.00	Does the project sponsor have any open 319 contracts?	Yes
Matching Funds		Project Title	Planning for Success: WRP Dev. through CDs
State Cash Match		DEQ Contract Number	216009
Local Cash Match		319 Award	$72,000.00
In-Kind Match	$20,000.00	Projected Closing Date	12/31/2017
Total Match	$20,000.00	Project Title	
Other Federal Funds		DEQ Contract Number	
Total Project Budget	$50,000.00	319 Award	
Administrative Fee		Projected Closing Date	

Section II: Project Description

Goal and Objectives: Describe the overall goal and specific objectives for this project.

The goal of the Education and Outreach Mini-Grant Program is to provide funding in the form of mini-grants up to $2,000 to promote NPS pollution education and outreach throughout Montana. This grant will award at least 12 mini-grants to eligible groups. Acceptable applications for funding include project proposals directly addressing NPS pollution reduction and water quality, and also develop an education and outreach activity to incorporate local community involvement in these topics. A main objective of this program is to increase local knowledge of issues surrounding water quality and provide insight on how communities can work together to develop best management practices to promote water quality within their watersheds.

Methods: Describe the approach selected to address/correct the problem(s), e.g. types of BMPs to be installed, and other important activities.

SWCDM will reach out to organizations statewide to promote the mini-grant program and solicit applications. Applications need to have a clearly defined description of NPS water quality issues to be addressed and include a defined education and outreach activity to support those water quality issues. Applications will be evaluated by a diverse review committee to ensure projects fulfill the requirements set forth and the program remains an effective tool to help communities take the next step towards addressing water quality impairments and build stakeholder support. While priority will be given to new and innovative projects over sustaining current activities, successful projects from completed grant cycles include: an education program to teach middle school students the negative effects of sediment; an irrigation tour to stress the effects and methods of mitigating NPS pollution related to agriculture; the development of education curriculum that have and will continue to reach thousands of students; development of volunteer monitoring groups to quantify water quality issues and present that data to educate the community on stream health and encourage BMPs; and streambank restoration projects that promoted water quality improvement and will serve as long-term community demonstrations.

Summary: Provide a brief summary of the project.

SWCDM will release two calls for mini-grant applications, in fall of 2017 and spring of 2018. Calls will be widely distributed throughout the state through emails, newsletters, social media, partners, numerous listservs, and other appropriate avenues to attract a wide and diverse applicant pool. Suitable applicants include conservation districts, watershed groups, schools, volunteer organizations, counties, etc., and must have the ability to manage federal funding. A review committee made up of agency, conservation district, and NGO professionals will evaluate and rank applications for content and eligibility. Priority will be given to new applicants, innovative NPS project proposals and education programs, and in areas with a DEQ-accepted WRP. A minimum of 12 education and outreach mini-grants of up to $2,000 will be awarded and will require a minimum of 40% non-federal match. With a fast turnaround from the time of the call until funds are available, this program meets local needs and puts funding on the ground quickly and effectively. Recipients will have approximately one year from the award date to complete NPS projects and submit final reports to SWCDM, according to guidelines set up by DEQ, which will include a summary of efforts made to reduce NPS pollution. Once award terms are well underway SWCDM will develop an effectiveness report to continue it's commitment to improving this program each year. A survey will be used to evaluate the ability of this program to provide its intended goals and objectives. This report will also analyze how the mini-grant program is impacting communities and educating the youth and adult public on NPS issues and how they are and can continue to contribute to NPS pollution reduction. In addition to FY2017 award recipients, the effectiveness report will include past award cycle recipients to track how past projects are still impacting communities, and provide insight into long term program efficiency and success.

Section III: Background Information

Statement of Project Need and Intent

The intent of the Education and Outreach Mini-grant Program is to help communities take the next step in addressing their specific NPS pollution reduction goals and needs based on watershed specific concerns and impairment listings. It is important for organizations to have a funding source available to build outreach and stakeholder support through workshops or watershed tours as an initial step in addressing NPS pollution issues, in addition to having a funding source to put NPS reduction projects on the ground, such as restoration projects or revegetation efforts. The mini-grant program can provide crucial "seed" funding to leverage other non-federal funding sources to accomplish these types of NPS pollution projects and related education throughout the state and among many diverse organizations. In the effectiveness report developed during the FY14 funding cycle, past recipients stated again and again how highly beneficial and important these education and outreach mini-grants were to them in meeting their NPS goals within their communities and to leverage additional sources of funding. SWCDM hopes to continue its commitment to this program by making these grants possible for future groups.

Describe the pre-project planning that has already occurred.

SWCDM has managed the mini-grant program since 2010, and in that time has completed 5 funding cycles (FY10, FY11, FY12, FY13, & FY14), with 2 cycles (FY15 & FY16) currently open. In the 5 completed cycles, $264,799 in non-federal match has been leveraged with $131,500 in 319 funding. The match generated from this program consistently doubles the 319 funding put in, and confirms the importance of the mini-grant program in providing the crucial "seed" money organizations need to get projects off the ground. Several examples of mini-grants providing initial start up funds include the following successful projects: "Trout in the Classroom," which taught students the importance of water quality to wildlife ($2K in 319, over $6K in match); the development of a "State of the Waters Report", highlighting the status of water quality ($2K in 319, over $4K in match); a watershed tour to educate stakeholders about current mining reclamation activities, and riparian restoration opportunities ($1K in 319, over $6K in match), and the development of an interpretative trail to focus on water quality monitoring efforts ($1.5K in 319, 14K in match). In a review of past award cycles, it is estimated this funding directly reaches an average of over 6,000 people per funding cycle. SWCDM has worked each year to maintain the competitiveness of this grant program while continually evaluating the program for efficiency and identifying where improvements are necessary. SWCDM will continue to build on the current infrastructure of the program while maintaining commitment to a successful, efficient, and effective program to engage a diversity of groups in NPS pollution education and outreach across the state.

Collaborative Effort: Describe the collaborative effort you have engaged in to ensure support from all appropriate partners.

SWCDM relies on support from a variety of partners to maintain the efficacy of the Education and Outreach Mini-grant Program. SWCDM works with partners to promote the program and ensure the calls for applications are reaching the broadest and most diverse audience possible. Additionally, SWCDM includes a diversified review committee comprised of partners representing agencies, educators, and conservation districts to evaluate the eligibility of mini-grant applications and ensure SWCDM is maintaining the highest standard possible when awarding mini-grants.

Partners and Roles: Identify the project partners and their roles.

Partner	Role
Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)	Oversight and funding of the program; assistance with application review and eligibility; program promotion
Conservation Districts	Assistance with application review and eligibility; program promotion; eligible to apply for mini-grant funding
Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC)	Assistance with application review and eligibility; program promotion
Montana Watershed Coordination Council (MWCC)	Assists with outreach during calls for applications by announcing the call through their membership network and through their newsletter and listserv
Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP)	Assistance with application review and eligibility; program promotion

Technical and Administrative Qualifications

SWCDM has a highly trained technical staff with degrees in natural resource sciences and years of experience in a wide range of natural resource fields. Each senior staff member at SWCDM has previously worked for programs that directly addressed NPS pollution issues. SWCDM staff also have extensive experience in program and grant management from initial planning to project evaluation and reporting. In addition, SWCDM has a broad and diverse board and membership, primarily focused in the forestry, range and agricultural fields. SWCDM works collaboratively with a variety of partners to ensure the highest standard of work is being performed with the most current technological resources. Additionally, SWCDM administers numerous federal, state, and non-governmental agreements, and is well-versed in project management with public and private funds.

Past and Current Projects

Funding Organization	Award Amount	Project Description	Project Status	Contact Information
DEQ	$30,000.00	FY2016 Education and Outreach Mini-grant Program - This program provides funding for education and outreach mini-grants to support projects addressing NPS pollution and water quality for a variety of organizations throughout the state.	Currently Open	Katie Steele, 406-444-0549, ksteele2@mt.gov
DEQ	$72000.00	Planning for Success: WRP Development thought Conservation Districts - This program was designed to assist conservation districts and other small organizations in the development of DEQ-acceptable WRPs. Funding was made available to these groups to provide staffing, technology, and other resources to make these plans possible.	Currently Open	Robert Ray, 406-444-5319, rray@mt.gov
DNRC	$165,703.00	Watershed Steward - This program has placed a water resource specialist in the northwestern region of Montana to provide direct technical and coordination assistance to local watershed groups, conservation districts, irrigation districts, and other stakeholders on water quality and quantity issues.	Currently Open	Ann Schwend, 406-444-1806, aschwend@mt.gov
NFWF	$75000.00	Transition Agriculture - This program is in place to develop a Transition Agriculture Initiative to provide assistance and resources to Montana producers in the face of changing technologies, markets, weather patterns, and species concerns. This program will tie together current programs and resources to improve producer communication and involvement.	Currently Open	Haven Whipple 202-857-0166, haven.whipple@nfwf.org

Section IV: Scope of Work

Task 1 Title: Mini-Grant Awards (Pass Through)

Description

SWCDM will award at least 12 education and outreach mini-grants of up to $2,000 each, to eligible entities proposing a project and education plan addressing NPS pollution or a water quality issue. Each award recipient will provide a minimum of 40% of the total award amount in non-federal match. Eligible entities include watershed groups, conservation districts, schools, counties, local government, agencies, non-profits and volunteer groups, and others able to manage federal funding. Projects implementing a DEQ-accepted Watershed Restoration Plan will be given a priority, as well as entities new to the program and those proposing a new or pilot program. Once mini-grants are awarded, recipients will have approximately one year to complete projects and submit final reports, before funding is reimbursed.

Deliverables

Individual mini-grant applications

Final reports submitted for each mini-grant, including the following:
-project goals, WRP information if applicable, NPS pollution or water quality issues addressed
-activities completed, partners involved, knowledge, skills and abilities developed by participants
-conclusions and outcomes of the project, any anticipated long-term impacts of the project
-opportunities for project continuation or expansion,
-final invoice and match statement

Task 1 Funding

319 Funds	$24,000.00
Non-Federal Match	$16,000.00
Other Federal Funds	
Total Cost	$40,000.00
Is Match Secured?	

Timeline: July 2017 - June 2019

Match Source: Awardees 40% non-federal match requirement

Task 2 Title: Management of the Mini-grant Program

Description

SWCDM will manage and promote the mini-grant program though coordination of meetings, solicitation of applicants, development of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) and scope of work (SOW) for each mini-grant awardee, and receipt and verification of complete mini-grant reports. SWCDM will ensure the application for mini-grants and the calls for applications follow requirements set forth by DEQ. In addition, SWCDM will form a review committee comprised of diverse partner representation, plus the DEQ contract manager to evaluate each call for applications and determine mini-grant funding based on the most competitive applications. SWCDM will develop a survey to evaluate and analyze program needs and determine program effectiveness and distribute this survey when individual mini-grant projects are nearing completion. A summary of results from this survey will be compiled into an effectiveness report designed to ensure this program is meeting community needs with regard to NPS education and outreach.

Deliverables

-Draft call for applications (2), scoring criteria, email notifications, and mini-grant application for DEQ comment and approval
-Final call for applications (2), scoring criteria, email notifications and application
-Summary of review committee results
-Notice of 'intent to award' letters and mini-grant recipients
-Draft and final MOU and SOW for each mini-grant recipient
-Updates to 319 mini-grant wiki site
-Report on program effectiveness, including a summary of survey results and recommendations for future mini-grant programs

Task 2 Funding

319 Funds	$3,000.00
Non-Federal Match	$3,000.00
Other Federal Funds	
Total Cost	$6,000.00
Is Match Secured?	

Timeline: July 2017-June 2019

Match Source: SWCDM staff and review committee in-kind time

Task 3 Title Project Administration

Description

SWCDM will oversee and be accountable for all tasks outlined in this application. SWCDM will prepare quarterly status reports, annual reports, a final report, and billing statements. SWCDM will update the DEQ project manager with all program activities through these reports and with regular communication. All reports will be submitted in electronic format or as requested by the DEQ project manager.

Deliverables

-Quarterly status reports: Q3-2017, Q1-2018, Q2-2018, Q3-2018, Q1-2019
-Annual reports: Dec. 31, 2017, Dec. 31, 2018
-Final report: June 30, 2019

Task 3 Funding

319 Funds	$3,000.00
Non-Federal Match	$1,000.00
Other Federal Funds	
Total Cost	$4,000.00
Is Match Secured?	

Timeline July 2017-June 2019

Match Source SWCDM staff time in-kind

Task 4 Title

Description

Deliverables

Task 4 Funding

319 Funds	
Non-Federal Match	
Other Federal Funds	
Total Cost	
Is Match Secured?	

Timeline

Match Source

Section V: Supporting Documents

Detailed Project Budget

Task Number and Specific Action	319 Funds	State Cash Match	Local Cash Match	In-Kind Match	Federal Funds	Total Costs
Task 1: Mini-grant Awards (Pass Through)	$24,000			$16,000		$40,000
Task 2: Management of the Mini-grant Program	$3,000			$3,000		$6,000
Task 3: Project Administration	$3,000			$1,000		$4,000
TOTAL	$30,000			$20,000		$50,000

Project Milestone Table: Complete the following Project Milestone Table by entering task numbers and titles in the left hand column, then check the box(es) for the appropriate quarter(s) and years(s) in which you will be working on the task.

Milestone	Spring 2017	Summer 2017	Fall 2017	Winter 2017	Spring 2018	Summer 2018	Fall 2018	Winter 2018	Spring 2019	Summer 2019	Fall 2019
Task 1: Mini-grant Awards (Pass Through)	☐	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	☐
Task 2: Mini-grant Program Management	☐	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	☐
Task 3: Project Administration	☐	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	☐
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Submit **project map(s)** and **letters of support (at least 3)** along with the Final Project Proposal form. If your organization is not the author of the WRP you hope to implement, you must request a letter of support from the original authoring entity. If the authoring entity refuses to provide a letter of support, use the additional space at the end of the application to describe their response. If design drawings are available, provide those as well. For on-the-ground work, include copies of applicable permits if available.

- ☐ Project Map
- ☒ Letters of Support
- ☐ Design Drawings
- ☐ Applicable Permits
- ☐ Draft of amended WRP (if applicable)
- ☐ Photos
- ☐ Landowner Agreements

Use the space provided for any additional information that may not have been captured elsewhere in this Final Project Proposal

Seven of the twelve pre-proposal applicants for DEQ's current 319 funding cycle (excluding SWCDM) are past or current awardees of a water quality mini-grant. The up to $2,000 mini-grants provided through this program have often provided project seed money that has allowed groups to engage their communities and get further water quality related projects and programs off the ground. For example, both the Bitter Root Water Forum and the Greater Gallatin Watershed Council were recipients of our inaugural mini-grant funding cycle in 2010/2011. Both these groups have been leaders in their communities on education the public on NPS pollution and ways to reduce it in their local areas.

Big Hole

Watershed Committee

Big Hole Watershed Committee
Post Office Box 21
Divide, MT 59727
(406) 960-4855
info@bhwc.org
www.bhwc.org

August 23, 2016

Montana Department of Environmental Quality
Attn: Robert Ray
Watershed Protection Section
1520 East Sixth Avenue
Helena, MT 59620-0901

Re: Letter of Support for the 319 Water Quality Mini-Grants Proposal

Dear Mr. Ray,

I am writing on behalf of the Big Hole Watershed Committee to extend our support for the Soil and Water Conservation Districts of Montana's (SWCDM) application for funding to allow the Water Quality Mini-Grants program to support nonpoint source education and outreach across Montana.

Established in 1995, the Big Hole Watershed Committee (BHWC) is a collaborative organization representing diverse regional interests; including ranchers, sportsmen, conservationists, tourists, and community members. For two decades, BHWC has taken a leadership role in enhancing the vitality of the Big Hole River, the surrounding watershed and communities, and the diverse and rare wildlife that inhabits the Big Hole Valley. The Big Hole River is the lifeblood for the surrounding area's natural and agricultural legacies, and the foundation for the region's economy. By pro-actively working to conserve this precious resource, BHWC is enriching one of Montana's last, best places for local residents and visitors from around the world.

Water Quality Mini-grants are awarded to organizations such as schools, nonprofit organizations, conservation districts, volunteer groups, etc., to provide up to $2,000 to fund education and outreach projects addressing nonpoint source pollution to waterbodies. These grants have a fast turnaround time, enabling organizations to get their projects on the ground quickly. Projects funded in the past include: citizen-based monitoring programs, water events and tours, youth education programs or events, production of newsletters and other media, education curriculums, and more.

BHWC has had nothing but positive experiences with the mini-grant program. It contributed funding toward the development of our River Conditions webpage, which can be accessed at http://bhwc.org and also provided education and outreach materials for our Big Hole River Incentive Program, a voluntary incentive program that addresses sediment concerns in the lower Big Hole River riparian corridor.

We fully support the Water Quality Mini-Grant proposal by SWCDM, and feel certain this project will directly result in increased benefits to Montana's watersheds.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Downing
BHWC Executive Director

Musselshell Watershed Coalition
P.O. Box 118
Winnett, MT 59087

11 August 2016

Montana Department of Environmental Quality
Attn: Robert Ray
Watershed Protection Section
1520 East Sixth Avenue
Helena, MT 59620-0901

Re: Letter of Support for the 319 Water Quality Mini-Grants Proposal

Dear Mr. Ray,

I am writing on behalf of the Musselshell Watershed Coalition to extend our support for the Soil and Water Conservation Districts of Montana's (SWCDM) application for funding to provide the Water Quality Mini-Grants program to support nonpoint source education and outreach across Montana.

The Musselshell Watershed Coalition is a partnership of individuals, organizations, and agencies working collaboratively towards whole basin management on the Musselshell River. The coalition has a three-part goal to achieve a desirable quality of life for water users, the residents of the Musselshell Valley, and the river itself. ***Goal 1:*** Water Quantity – Meet decreed and contract water rights obligations by sustaining sufficient water in the Musselshell through cooperative flow management and a well-maintained irrigation infrastructure system. ***Goal 2:*** Water Quality – Proactively work with State agencies to meet State Water Standards using a volunteer local approach. ***Goal 3:*** Provide Governance, Planning & Outreach for the Coalition.

Water Quality Mini-grants are awarded to organizations such as schools, nonprofit organizations, conservation districts, volunteer groups, etc., to provide up to $2,000 to fund education and outreach projects addressing nonpoint source pollution to waterbodies. These grants have a fast turnaround time, enabling organizations to get their projects on the ground quickly. Projects funded in the past include: citizen-based monitoring programs, water events and tours, youth education programs or events, production of newsletters and other media, education curriculums, and more.

We were awarded a Water Quality Mini-Grant in the spring of 2016. These funds supported the efforts of our Big Sky Watershed Corps member in coordinating the Musselshell River citizen-based volunteer salinity monitoring project, delivering watershed educational presentations to elementary and high school students, and supplementing salinity sampling equipment maintenance costs.

We fully support the Water Quality Mini-Grant proposal by SWCDM, and feel certain this project will directly result in increased benefits to Montana's watersheds.

Sincerely,
Laura Nowlin
MWC Coordinator

Whitefish Lake INSTITUTE
501 (c)(3) Non-Profit Corporation

550 E. 1st St. #103
Whitefish, MT 59937

Voice: 406.862.4327
Fax: 406.862.0686

www.whitefishlake.org
info@whitefishlake.org

Robert Ray
Montana Department of Environmental Quality
Watershed Protection Section
1520 East Sixth Avenue
Helena, MT 59620-0901

6 September 2016

Re: 319 Water Quality Mini-Grants Proposal: Letter of Support

Dear Robert,

On behalf of the Whitefish Lake Institute (WLI), I am writing to enthusiastically support the Soil and Water Conservation Districts of Montana's (SWCDM) application for funding to provide grants through the Water Quality Mini-Grants program. From our perspective, this program has directly improved nonpoint source education and outreach throughout Montana by encouraging and supporting numerous nonprofit efforts.

As you know, WLI was founded on—and continues to operate based on—three programmatic areas, Scientific Research, Education & Outreach, and Community Stewardship. Through our Education & Outreach programs, we reach thousands of people annually, engaging them in activities and projects that help them learn about nonpoint source pollution and other important water quality conservation issues. We have received and participated with partners in Water Quality Mini-grants that have helped move projects from concept to completion, engaging students in addressing these issues.

These grants—awarded for up to $2000—have a much quicker turnaround time than other grants, enabling organizations to turn projects into reality with promptness and agility. One of the most profound projects supported by these grants with which WLI has been involved is the *Flathead Watershed Sourcebook Educators' Guide*. This extraordinary effort has brought to fruition a new tool for the educator's toolbox to involve students in activities that help them learn about and address water quality issues in an engaging and memorable way, while enabling educators to meet Montana State teaching standards.

Please accept this letter as a commitment of support for the SWCDM Water Quality Mini-Grant proposal which we believe will continue to result in watershed-wide improvements in water quality and will help develop a water quality ethic in the stewards of tomorrow.

Sincerely,

Lori S Curtis

Lori S. Curtis
Science & Education Director

Printed on recycled paper