



2023 319 Application Form - Mini-grant Programs

General Information

Program Name	Big Sky Watershed Corps Mini-Grants: Building Local Capacity to Reduce and Prevent Nonpoint Source Pollution		
Sponsor Name	Montana Watershed Coordination Council (MWCC)		
Registered with the Secretary of State?	<input checked="checked" type="checkbox"/>	Registered with SAM?	<input checked="checked" type="checkbox"/>
UEI #	078805000		
Does your organization have liability insurance?	<input checked="checked" type="checkbox"/>		
Primary Contact	Terri Nichols		
Signatory	Ethan Kunard		
Title	Watershed Programs Manager		
Title	Executive Director		
Address	PO Box 1416		
Address	PO Box 1416		
City	Helena	State	<input checked="checked" type="checkbox"/> MT Zip Code 59624
City	Helena	State	<input checked="checked" type="checkbox"/> MT Zip Code 59624
Phone Number	(406) 210-1217		
Phone Number	(406) 475-1420		
Email Address	terri@mtwatersheds.org		
Email Address	ethan@mtwatersheds.org		
Signature	Terri Nichols		
Signature	Ethan Kunard		

Digitally signed by Terri Nichols
Date: 2022.10.06 16:17:36 -06'00'

Digitally signed by Ethan Kunard
Date: 2022.10.07 07:49:15 -06'00'

Technical and Administrative Qualifications

Terri Nichols will manage this grant for MWCC. Since 2018, when Terri began managing the MWCC Watershed Fund (See Attachment A), the Fund has awarded more than \$1 million in small grants (\$100-\$30,000) from 10 separate public and private funders, including more than \$300,000 in 319 funding to support NPS pollution reduction and prevention through the Big Sky Watershed Corps (BSWC) program. (See Attachment B.) Terri also sits on the Steering Committee that provides direction for the BSWC program, along with the Montana Association of Conservation Districts (MACD) and Montana Conservation Corps (MCC). Terri has an Associate's Degree in Natural Resource Management, a Bachelor's Degree in Journalism, and a Master's Degree in Environmental Studies. Prior to joining MWCC, she worked with the U.S. Forest Service and Montana Natural Heritage Program on stream and wetland monitoring.

For reviewing mini-grant proposals and making awards under this program, MWCC relies on the expertise of our Watershed Fund Reviewers as well as the DEQ contract manager. Our Watershed Fund Reviewers are:

- Jordan Tollefson, a water quality scientist with NorthWestern Energy who runs the water quality programs for NorthWestern's 11 hydroelectric facilities. Jordan has a degree in Fisheries and Wildlife Biology and serves on the MWCC Board of Directors.
- Torie Haraldson, a water quality specialist with the Gallatin Local Water Quality District who holds a Master's Degree in Land Resources and Environmental Sciences at Montana State University. Torie is a former MWCC Board member.
- Emily Harkness, a program manager at Heart of the Rockies Initiative. Emily holds a graduate certificate in Natural Resource Conflict Resolution and a Bachelor's degree in Zoology and has experience as a fisheries technician.
- Hannah Jaicks, a program manager at Future West who specializes in using psychology to develop better communication and inclusion around issues of conservation and sustainable development. Hannah has a Ph.D in Environmental Psychology.

Budget

	319 Funding Request	Non-Federal Match	Other Funding	Total Cost
Program Development, Marketing and Solicitation <i>(Includes development and deployment of application process, marketing the program to the target audience, receipt and evaluation of project proposals, and writing and executing mini-grant contracts.)</i>	\$ 2,000	\$ 4,125		\$ 6,125
Mini-grant Implementation and Oversight <i>(Includes funding provided in the mini-grants and the costs of managing the mini-grant contracts. May also include correspondence, site visits, training, and problem resolution.)</i>	\$ 4,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 10,000
Program Evaluation <i>(Includes evaluation of the impact of individual mini-grants and the program as a whole on nonpoint source pollution. For on-the-ground projects designed to address nitrogen, phosphorus or sediment, task may include gathering information necessary for DEQ to evaluate pollutant load reductions achieved from project implementation.)</i>	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000		\$ 2,000
Project Administration <i>(Includes reporting, invoicing, office expenses, transportation, etc. 319 funding applied to this task must not exceed 10% of the total amount of 319 funding requested, or \$12,000, whichever is lower.)</i>	\$ 5,000			\$ 5,000
Other (specify)				
Mini-Grants to partially fund the costs of hosting a BSWC member to build host sites' capacity to reduce and prevent nonpoint source pollution (Cost Share)	\$ 36,000	\$ 36,000		\$ 72,000
Other (specify)				
Mini-Grants to partially fund small-scale, on-the-ground, BSWC member-led projects to reduce and prevent nonpoint source pollution in impaired waterbodies (Projects)	\$ 28,000	\$ 20,000		\$ 48,000
Other (specify)				
Mini-Grants to partially fund the costs of professional development opportunities, workshops, and trainings relevant to reducing and preventing NPS for BSWC members and host site personnel (PD)	\$ 2,000			\$ 2,000
Total	\$ 78,000	\$ 62,125	\$ 5,000	\$ 145,125

Match Source	Non-federal (cash and in-kind)	Match Secured?	Letter of Support Attached?
Annual cost of Submittable grant application, review, and tracking software, paid by MWCC	\$ 4,125.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Y	<input type="checkbox"/>
MWCC Staff time - In-Kind	\$ 2,000.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Y	<input type="checkbox"/>
BSWC Host Sites - cash and in-kind match required for individual mini-grants	\$ 56,000.00	<input type="checkbox"/> N	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/> N	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/> N	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/> N	<input type="checkbox"/>

Program Description

Describe the types of projects or activities you will fund.

Big Sky Watershed Corps (BSWC - See Attachment B) is an AmeriCorps service program that builds the capacity of local watershed conservation organizations to protect watershed health through a wide range of activities, including project implementation and monitoring, education, community outreach, and volunteer recruitment. Jointly managed by MWCC, MCC, and MACD, BSWC places young professionals in communities across Montana from January to November each year.

Many BSWC members help their hosting organizations (host sites) implement DEQ-accepted Watershed Restoration Plans to reduce and prevent NPS pollution. Through seven different 319 contracts since 2015, the MWCC Watershed Fund (see Attachment A) has supported this work by distributing more than \$300,000 in 319 funding to 23 qualifying local watershed conservation organizations to help them host BSWC members and to help those members implement on-the-ground projects. If we receive funding again, we will fund the following in 2024:

- Cost Share mini-grants of up to \$6,000 to offset the \$12,250 cost share fee for hosting a BSWC member. Cost Share grants will require members to carry out activities that implement the local WRP, including: education, community outreach, volunteer recruitment and management, project planning and assistance, and program development.
- Professional Development mini-grants of up to \$500 to offset the costs of relevant training opportunities for both members and host site personnel to more effectively and sustainably reduce and prevent NPS pollution in local watersheds.
- Project mini-grants of up to \$8,000 to help fund small-scale NPS pollution prevention and reduction projects, including riparian revegetation, stream restoration, and infrastructure to manage livestock in riparian areas. Members will write, manage, and administer these mini-grants as part of their professional development as well as their role in building host site capacity.

How much money will each mini-grant recipient receive?
(provide a range or an exact dollar amount)

- Cost Share: \$4,000-\$6,000
- Projects: \$1,000-\$8,000
- Professional Development (PD): \$200-\$500

How many mini-grants will you distribute?

- Cost Share: 6-7
- Projects: 4-8
- PD: 4-10
- Total: 14-25

Target Audience

Who is the target audience (potential recipients) for the mini-grant program?

Potential recipients for this mini-grant program are local conservation organizations (primarily watershed groups, conservation districts, and water quality districts) that host a BSWC member specifically to help reduce or prevent nonpoint source pollution by implementing recommendations in DEQ-accepted Watershed Restoration Plans (WRPs). The number of these qualifying host sites has increased in recent years, from 9 in 2019 to 12 in 2021, and now 22 qualifying host sites for 2023. The BSWC program has grown overall during this time (from 24 members in 2019 to 46 members approved for 2023), and the target audience is expected to continue growing into 2024 - the year this funding would be distributed.

Describe the target audience's potential to have meaningful impact on NPS pollution.

The target audience has enormous potential to have a meaningful impact on NPS pollution. These collaborative, consensus-based, locally driven watershed groups and districts have built trust within their communities, have proven records for working with landowners and getting restoration projects on the ground, and often are the authors of their local WRPs. These organizations know their communities and know how best to reduce and prevent NPS within their local watersheds. With the additional capacity provided by BSWC members and these mini-grants, they are able to accomplish even more.

Another reason BSWC host sites are able to have meaningful impacts on NPS pollution is the extensive training that BSWC members receive in the first months of their terms. In January, both members and their host site supervisors learn how to better communicate and work together, and members learn about Montana's communities, agriculture, state agencies, and conservation efforts. In February, BSWC members learn effective education and outreach approaches and strategies as well as grant writing skills, and they make more connections with state agencies and conservation leaders. In April, they learn technical skills related to water quality and quantity, science communication, and Aquatic Invasive Species prevention and response.

How will you market the program to the target audience?

Because of MWCC's close relationship with qualifying host sites, both through the BSWC program and through our larger statewide network, we are in a unique position to market this mini-grant program both broadly and in more targeted ways. Among the ways that we have and will continue to publicize this funding are:

- Direct emails to qualifying local watershed conservation organizations that are currently hosting, or considering hosting, a BSWC member.
- Emails to all current and potential future BSWC host sites, since the availability of this funding sometimes prompts organizations to host a member or to focus their member's efforts on WRP implementation and NPS reductions when they might not have otherwise.
- Announcements of funding in MWCC's bi-weekly Watershed News
- Announcements of funding on MWCC's website, mtwatersheds.org
- Announcements of funding during monthly conference calls with host sites conducted by the BSWC Steering Committee, which includes MWCC.

In addition, qualifying watershed groups and conservation districts who have previously hosted BSWC members are already aware of this funding, since MWCC has made cost share funding available through this program since 2015, and project support funding available since 2017. Often these organizations will reach out to MWCC staff directly to ask if and when funding will be available in the coming year.

Is there adequate interest to ensure full use of requested funding within a 3-year period? Please explain.

Yes. We typically expend all of the requested funding within one year of BSWC service. We have sometimes had to return Project funding when members' projects come in under budget, and Professional Development funding has been difficult to distribute recently due to the cancellation of many in-person events during the Covid-19 pandemic, as well as the desire for more free, online events. For this reason, we are reducing the amount of funding requested for professional development from \$5,000 in previous years to \$2,000 this year. The need for BSWC cost share and project funding has increased in recent years, with more qualifying host sites applying each year. As mentioned above, we expect this trend to continue into 2024, with the number of qualifying BSWC host sites and the total number of BSWC host sites increasing. If we are unable to expend all Project or Professional Development mini-grant funds as expected, we can transfer these funds to other host sites or utilize Professional Development funds to develop webinars and other online resources to support NPS pollution reduction and prevention in local watersheds.

Are there other, similar grant programs available to potential recipients, and if so, how will your program fill a unique niche?

There are no other grant programs available specifically to fund BSWC members' work to reduce and prevent NPS in local watersheds, or to fund the type of small-scale, on-the-ground projects that these mini-grants support. MACD also offers cost share funding to host BSWC members, but their cost share funding is targeted at Conservation Districts rather than other local conservation organizations and is for conservation and soil health work, not for water quality improvements or WRP implementation specifically.

MACD and MWCC work closely to steer local conservation organizations to the appropriate funding source. We do the same with our complimentary, 319-funded Projects and Education & Outreach mini-grants. In this way, we ensure that our funding sources collectively provide the most benefit to the largest number of local watershed conservation organizations, and that DEQ's 319 funds are spent on work most appropriate and beneficial to improving water quality.

How will the program increase local capacity or interest for addressing NPS pollution?

This program has allowed several local conservation organizations to host a BSWC member when they otherwise wouldn't have been able to afford to. Many have been able to commit to hosting a member only because of the availability of this funding. This program has also sparked interest in addressing NPS pollution through BSWC members' work rather than assigning them to other activities. Two 2022 host sites (Yaak Valley Forest Council and Missoula Stormwater Utility) who were not previously planning to have their BSWC members implement on-the-ground NPS prevention and reduction projects have been able to do so this year because of 319 Project funding available to BSWC members through the MWCC Watershed Fund. After co-hosting an NPS-focused member with the Missoula Stormwater Utility in 2022, the Missoula Conservation District will be hosting their own member to focus on NPS pollution in 2023. Additionally, local organizations that receive this funding have increased their capacity to address NPS pollution over time, especially those that have hosted BSWC members for multiple years. The Gallatin River Task Force, Bitter Root Water Forum, Gallatin Watershed Council, and Ruby Valley Conservation District are just a few examples. All have written Letters of Support for this mini-grant funding in the past, but we try not to ask them for letters over multiple years.

How will the program create **long-lasting change** in social norms or attitudes toward addressing NPS pollution?

This program creates long-lasting change in social norms and attitudes toward addressing NPS pollution in numerous ways, including building support for education programs, expanding volunteer efforts, and freeing up staff to build long-term relationships with landowners and other stakeholders. One example is the Gallatin Watershed Council, whose four successive BSWC members started and developed the Gallatin Watershed Stewards (GWS) program, which formally engages community members and local businesses in long-term watershed health through trainings, long-term volunteering, and events. 2019 BSWC member Zane launched the program; 2020 and 2021 members Brooke and Heather expanded it to engage businesses and launch the "Busy Beavers" NPS training and volunteering program; and 2022 member Tess has expanded volunteer programs. Through GWS, 16 businesses have changed their operations to reduce NPS; there are now 80 trained, returning "Busy Beavers" volunteers; and more than 250 total volunteers participated in restoration and NPS prevention projects with GWC in 2022 alone.

Program Implementation and Evaluation

Describe the application submittal, evaluation and contracting processes you will use.

Since 2018, the MWCC Watershed Fund has been soliciting, awarding, contracting, managing, and evaluating small grants through a streamlined process that centers local conservation needs while ensuring effective outcomes. In 2019, we improved this process and our tracking by switching to the Submittable online grant submission and management system. Our current process for application submittal, evaluation, and contracting is as follows:

- We accept proposals for all three types of mini-grants offered under this program through the online platform Submittable, where both applicants and MWCC can track proposals every step of the way.
- For Cost Share and Project Support mini-grants, MWCC Watershed Fund Reviewers and the DEQ contract manager score and evaluate funding proposals using a precise ranking system, supported by individual comments and thoughtful discussion at a meeting. (MWCC Staff and the DEQ contract manager alone make decisions on Professional Development mini-grants, since these are for much smaller amounts and come in on a rolling basis throughout the year.) Watershed Fund reviewers and the DEQ contract manager also make suggestions for improving projects and cost share work plans, based on their areas of expertise.
- MWCC Staff work with host site supervisors (for cost share funding) and supervisors and BSWC members (for project funding) to finalize work and project plans before including these in a draft agreement between MWCC and the host site that lays out funding requirements, including non-federal match, and grant reporting requirements.
- MWCC Staff work with the DEQ contract manager to approve work and project plans before agreements are finalized and signed.

Key requirements for this mini-grant funding are implementation of a DEQ-accepted WRP, hosting a BSWC member to help implement that WRP, carrying out activities and projects that directly and indirectly address NPS pollution in the watershed, submission of interim and final reports, and providing non-federal match for all funded activities. Project mini-grants also require projects to be completed on impaired water bodies, a signed landowner agreement, Endangered Species Act considerations and compliance, and the supply of sufficient information for DEQ to estimate pollutant load reductions. Attachment C is our most recent funding announcement for Cost Share mini-grants (for 2023). Attachment D is our most recent funding announcement for Project mini-grants (for 2022). Both include review criteria and funding requirements.

Describe the project oversight you will provide to mini-grant recipients.

BSWC members are responsible for grant management and reporting for all three types of mini-grants offered by this program, reducing the work load for their host site supervisors and providing professional development opportunities for the members. Often this is the member's first time managing a grant, so oversight and regular contact with both BSWC member and host site supervisors are crucial to ensure that work and project plans are completed successfully. MWCC Staff provide mini-grant oversight in the following ways:

- Co-host a grant-writing workshop specifically for BSWC members, to prepare them to apply for mini-grant Project funding available in the Spring, as well as other grants that may be appropriate to their work. (Host site supervisors apply for Cost Share funding themselves, prior to members coming on board.)
- Host a webinar for BSWC members who are awarded funding to go over reporting requirements, as well as grant reporting tips, for both Cost Share and Project grants.
- Provide reporting FAQ documents for both Cost Share and Project grants.
- Keep in touch with members and host site supervisors throughout the life of the grant to ensure work is progressing as planned and to make adjustments when necessary.
- Evaluate interim Cost Share and Project reports midway through members' terms and provide feedback as a teaching tool to ensure that final reporting is comprehensive and accurate.
- Visit 1-2 funded projects during implementation.

List the metrics you will use to quantify the effects of individual mini-grant projects or activities.

The MWCC Watershed Fund uses the following metrics to quantify the effects of individual Cost Share, Professional Development, and Project Support mini-grants on NPS pollution, community engagement, and host site capacity to address NPS pollution:

- Number of Stakeholders Engaged. This includes only local community members actively engaged in volunteering, workshops, education, or direct outreach. It does not include newsletter recipients, social media engagement, etc.
- Number of Volunteers Recruited for the host site organization.
- Number of Conservation Practices Implemented. These include a list of specific conservation practices related to NPS pollution, including riparian infrastructure and management improvements, riparian vegetation planting, in-channel habitat improvements, impervious stormwater runoff reduction, pollution reduction infrastructure, stream clean-ups, and soil health improvements.
- Number of Acres Made More Resilient to changing conditions through Conservation Practices Implemented.
- Number of Stream and Lakeshore Miles Improved through Conservation Practices Implemented

Additionally, the Watershed Fund gathers data on project specifics, such as total acreage, width of riparian buffers treated or restored, number of plantings, and length of fencing installed. Final reporting for BSWC 319 project support also requires information to help DEQ calculate load reductions for on-the-ground projects, specific to each project. DEQ staff determine information needed to calculate load reductions for each project during the process of finishing mini-grant work plans and funding agreements.

List the metrics you will use for evaluating the effectiveness of your mini-grant program as a whole.

Metrics used for evaluating the effectiveness of this program as a whole include those listed above, as well as:

- Number of qualifying BSWC Host Sites supported each year.
- Number of on-the-ground NPS pollution prevention and reduction projects funded each year
- Amount of match funding leveraged to support local conservation organizations' NPS pollution work and WRP implementation
- Qualitative data gathered from BSWC members through the following reporting questions:
 - In terms of implementing your local WRP and building your host site organization's capacity to address nonpoint source pollution, what has worked well or been most successful, and why?
 - In terms of implementing your local WRP and building your host site organization's capacity to address nonpoint source pollution, what has been most challenging, and why? Is there anything MWCC could do to help?
 - If applicable, what have you done differently than your BSWC predecessor? How did that impact your host site's ability to address NPS pollution?
 - What changes would you recommend to your host site's next BSWC member?
- Qualitative data gathered from host site supervisors through the following reporting questions:
 - How is this project building the long-term capacity of your host site to implement more NPS pollution prevention and reduction projects and/or to meet other WRP goals beyond the BSWC member's term?
 - What skills, knowledge, or other professional development experiences has the BSWC member gained from working on this project?
 - What potential is there to implement similar projects elsewhere in your watershed?

Community Participation and Support

Partner	Contribution to the Program	Letter of Support Attached?
Montana Conservation Corps (MCC)	With MWCC and MACD, solicits and selects BSWC host sites, promotes and manages the BSWC Program. Manages the AmeriCorps grant that funds most of the BSWC program. Interviews and vets BSWC member candidates. Provides member training and support.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Montana Association of Conservation Districts (MACD)	With MWCC and MCC, solicits and selects BSWC host sites, promotes and manages the BSWC Program. Assists with member training and support. Provides support to CDs. Provides BSWC cost share mini-grants for soil health and general conservation activities. Coordinates with MWCC on BSWC funding opportunities.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Qualified BSWC Host Sites statewide, including Watershed Groups and Conservation Districts	Host and supervise BSWC members. Ensure BSWC members complete funded activities and projects according to work plans. Seek and facilitate professional development opportunities for members and host site personnel relevant to reducing and preventing NPS pollution.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>

Other Supporters

Entity	Letter of Support Attached?
	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>

Program Timeline

Task Description	3Q 2023	4Q 2023	1Q 2024	2Q 2024	3Q 2024	4Q 2024	1Q 2025	2Q 2025	3Q 2025	4Q 2025	1Q 2026	2Q 2026
Announce funding opportunity for Cost Share mini-grants for 2024	✓											
Award Cost Share mini-grants, ahead of the application deadline to host a BSWC member	✓											
Establish work plans and funding agreements for Cost Share mini-grants	✓	✓										
Notify 2024 host sites of the availability of PD and Project mini-grants for 2024		✓										
Monthly check-ins with host sites receiving Cost Share mini-grants		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						
Announce Professional Development and BSWC Project Support mini-grants			✓									
Co-host a grant writing training for all BSWC members			✓									
Provide information about PD and Project mini-grant opportunities to BSWC members			✓									
Project mini-grant proposals due			✓									
Host reporting webinar for members working under Cost Share mini-grants. Provide FAQ document.			✓									
Award project mini-grants				✓								
Establish scopes of work and funding agreements for Project mini-grants				✓								
Accept applications for and award funding for Professional Development mini-grants			✓	✓	✓	✓						
Members' Interim Cost Share reports due. Provide feedback to members on the reports.				✓								
Members' Interim Project reports due. Provide feedback to members on the reports.				✓								
Final Cost Share and Project reports due. Review reports to ensure completion and accuracy.						✓						
MWCC submits final report to DEQ and works with contract manager to complete contract						✓						

Bigger Picture Considerations

Environmental Justice (EJ)

Explain how your project incorporates disadvantaged community populations and priorities, Tribal and community leader engagement, or socioeconomic barriers in the context of equal protection and access to a healthy environment.

MWCC and the BSWC Program strive to support disadvantaged communities' priorities. This mini-grant program has supported rural community goals for a clean and healthy environment through BSWC service in Lake, Madison, and Lincoln counties. Members have also served in the Blackfeet Nation and in rural communities including Winnett, Havre, Ekalaka, Plentywood, and Bridger. However none of these communities has a DEQ-accepted WRP, so they are not eligible for these mini-grants.

Additionally, MWCC and MCC are working to provide opportunities for young professionals from disadvantaged backgrounds to serve in ways that benefit them and their conservation careers. For 2023, MWCC is allowing host sites to use Cost Share mini-grant funding to help members pay for housing costs. MCC is hosting affinity groups for BSWC members who identify as queer, BIPOC, and differently abled to talk about their experiences. Outside the BSWC program, MWCC has been hosting monthly Equity, Inclusion, and Justice conversations since mid-2021 to support the efforts of our local partners and ourselves to bring environmental justice into our conservation work. None of these efforts changes the many barriers that exist for disadvantaged populations seeking a clean, healthy, and equitable environment in Montana. But MWCC Staff are continuing to examine our role in environmental injustices and to ask how we can make changes for the better.

Climate Change/Resilience

How will your project improve climate change resilience for communities, native plants, wildlife, or ecosystems?

The BSWC program as a whole encourages efforts to improve climate change resilience in myriad ways, including support for local efforts to increase cool, late-season flows and water storage; improve riparian habitat; improve drought planning and response; increase soil health; and educate community members about the effects of climate change on our communities, watersheds, and ecosystems.

This mini-grant program specifically encourages these efforts by providing funding for BSWC member activities, professional development opportunities, and projects that improve climate change resilience in local communities. Related activities and projects funded by this program in the past that directly or indirectly improve climate change resilience include:

- Low-tech restoration to increase connectivity between streams and their floodplains, groundwater infiltration, natural flood resilience, and late-season flows
- Education and outreach related to drought, flood, and fire resiliency for communities, watersheds, and ecosystems
- Engaging local businesses, landowners, and community members in climate resiliency efforts
- Revegetation of stream banks to increase shading and groundwater infiltration, improve wildlife habitat, and cool waters

Impacts to Downstream Human, Plant and Animal Communities

What sort of an impact will your project have on downstream human, plant or animal communities?

Many of the projects and activities listed in previous sections of this application have had positive impacts on downstream communities. These and others include:

- Revegetation of reclaimed mining sites in the Ninemile and the Lower Gallatin watersheds
- Low-tech restoration to increase groundwater storage and stream flows
- Revegetation of stream banks to increase shading and groundwater storage, encouraging stream cooler temperatures and increased stream flow

All of these projects - and much of the work of BSWC members supported by these Project and Cost Share mini-grants generally - are designed to reduce nutrient pollution in local waterways. This increases the capacity of these waters to assimilate pollutants from downstream wastewater treatment plant discharges.

This mini-grant program will continue to support these and other similar efforts.

Additional Attachments

Attach additional items that could help reviewers better understand your project. Items could include site photos, design drawings, site evaluations, permits, etc. Please be conscious of reviewers' time, as they may not have time to read lengthy studies and reports. List all additional attachments below.

☐

Attachment A - A page from MWCC's 2021 Impact Report, highlighting impacts of the MWCC Watershed Fund as a whole, as well as other ways that MWCC Connects and Supports local communities, conservation, and water quality statewide.

☐

Attachment B - A Big Sky Watershed Corps Frequently Asked Questions document, created by MCC for potential BSWC host sites, that explains some of the details of the BSWC Program

☐

Attachment C - The MWCC Watershed Fund's Request for Proposals for 2022 BSWC Host Site Cost Share funding under our existing DEQ 319 Cost Share mini-grant program

☐

Attachment D - The MWCC Watershed Fund's Request for Proposals for 2022 BSWC Project Support funding under our existing DEQ 319 Cost Share mini-grant program

☐☐

Additional information that could assist reviewers in evaluating the project's potential impact on NPS pollution.

Letters of Support



Board of Directors

Sharon Dedmon
President

Charlie Larson
Vice President

Sherry Ritter
Secretary

Don McGourty
Treasurer

Donna Haglund

Alex Hibala

Ed Snook

Megan Winderl

Scott Ziegenfuss

Agriculture Advisors

Dan Huls

Dan Severson

Executive Director

Heather Barber

Program Coordinator

Katie Vennie

Restoration Coordinator

Andrea Price

AmeriCorps Member

Emilie Lahneman

Bookkeeper

Jenny West

PO Box 1247
178 S. 2nd St
Hamilton, MT 59840

(406) 375-2272
brwaterforum@
bitterroot.net

brwaterforum.org

Montana Department of Environmental Quality
Attn: Mark Ockey
Watershed Protection Bureau
P.O. Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620

October 25, 2019

RE: Letter of support for the Montana Watershed Coordination Council

Dear Mr. Ockey,

The Bitter Root Water Forum (BRWF) is writing in support of the Montana Watershed Coordination Council's (MWCC) 319 Grant application to provide cost share, project, and professional development funding to organizations hosting Big Sky Watershed Corps Members.

The Water Forum's ability to successfully address nonpoint source pollution in our watershed is greatly enhanced through our BSWC Member. Our first member helped draft our Watershed Restoration Plan and every Member since has helped implement recommendations from the Plan, from watershed education to on-the-ground restoration. With a BSWC Member in place, watershed groups are able to do even more to improve water quality in Montana.

However, since the tenure of a BSWC Member is eleven months there are few opportunities for them to gain experience seeing a project grant through from drafting to implementation. The program MWCC proposes provides an opportunity for Members to successfully develop and execute projects, giving them ownership in restoration work in Montana. I have seen firsthand how these opportunities inspire future efforts.

In addition to the tangible on the ground results, project dollars available through MWCC have allowed our organization to build stronger partnerships and accomplish more riparian revegetation efforts in the Bitterroot watershed into the future. By working with MWCC to provide project support dollars, DEQ will help restoration efforts with the Water Forum, Big Sky Watershed Corps, and beyond.

We thank you for funding past efforts and strongly urge you to fund MWCC's proposal for 2020.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Heather Barber".

Heather Barber



CONTACT
(406) 443-5711
mail@macdnet.org

OFFICE ADDRESS
1101 11th Ave
Helena, MT 59601

October 6, 2022

Montana Department of Environmental Quality
Attn: Mark Ockey
1520 E 6th Ave
Helena, MT 59601

Re: Montana Watershed Coordination Council 319 Funding Application

Dear Mark,

On behalf of the Montana Association of Conservation Districts (MACD), I am writing to extend our support for the Montana Watershed Coordination Council (MWCC) application for 319 funding to support Big Sky Watershed Corp (BSWC) host sites. As you will know, MACD, MWCC, and MCC collaborate on the BSWC program. MWCC has been a valued partner and an essential resource for the watershed community, as well as conservation districts across the state.

MWCC has been an integral partner in the success of the BSWC program, and that is a direct result of the funding and support that they provide to BSWC host sites through the 319 funding they secure. These funds help build capacity in organizations that desperately need it, allowing them to successfully implement Watershed Restoration Plans for their area and complete projects they would not otherwise be able to accomplish.

The BSWC host site support provided through these funds allows watershed organizations and conservation districts to implement projects that effectively mitigate nonpoint source pollution, increase capacity and training for technical assistance, and expand their reach and opportunity for future project development.

MACD supports MWCC's application as it will provide essential funding to organizations that support conservation on the ground and protect Montana's watersheds. Thank you for your consideration of MWCC's application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Rebecca Boslough-King". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Rebecca" being more prominent.

Rebecca Boslough-King
MACD Executive Director



**MONTANA
CONSERVATION
CORPS**



206 N. Grand Ave, Bozeman, MT 59715 • PH:406.587.4475 • www.mtcorps.org

Montana Department of Environmental Quality
Attn: Mark Ockey
Watershed Protection Bureau
P.O. Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620
Re: Montana Watershed Coordination Council 319 Funding Application

October 6, 2022

Dear Mark,

I am writing on behalf of the Montana Conservation Corps (MCC) to express my full support of the Montana Watershed Coordination Council (MWCC) and their local 319 funding request. MWCC provides a vital service to Montana's watersheds and local communities and is a key partner in successfully implementing the Big Sky Watershed Corps (BSWC) program. Their community-based initiatives are incredibly effective and efficient and they are unwavering in their efforts to be inclusive and thoughtful in every enterprise they undertake.

319 funding provided by the Montana Department of Environmental Quality and administered by MWCC has played a substantial role in the success of partner organizations and ultimately the success of our BSWC AmeriCorps members. In providing this funding MWCC has not only been able to successfully meet its mission, but has also provided invaluable resources to local Montana watersheds and communities resulting in a measurable and lasting on-the-ground impact that will benefit future generations. The projects implemented as a result of the funding were efficient and effective in mitigating nonpoint source pollution and allowed small, yet ever important, watershed organizations to better establish a community presence, build capacity and greatly improve Montana's most precious resource, water. MWCC provides essential capacity in efforts to improve Montana's watersheds and we are incredibly fortunate to partner with them in implementing the BSWC program.

MWCC has formed sustainable and resilient partnerships and has led the way in creating new and innovative approaches to properly address critical watershed related issues.

Montanans will all greatly benefit from the services of MWCC and I strongly urge you to award full funding support to the organization.

Best Regards,

Bryan N. Wilson
Director-Individual Placement Programs
Montana Conservation Corps
Office- (406).587.4475 x107
Email- bryan@mtcorps.org





PUBLIC WORKS & MOBILITY DEPARTMENT – STORMWATER

1345 W. Broadway • Missoula, Montana 59802 • (406) 552-6357

October 5, 2022

Montana Department of Environmental Quality
Attn: Mark Ockey
Water Protection Bureau
PO Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620

RE: Letter of Support for the Montana Watershed Coordination Council

Dear Mr. Ockey:

The City of Missoula Stormwater Utility is writing in support of the Montana Watershed Coordination Council's (MWCC) 319 Grant application to provide cost share, project, and professional development funding to organizations hosting Big Sky Watershed Corps Members.

The Stormwater Utility has hosted Montana Conservation Corps Fellows in the past and we are currently hosting a Big Sky Watershed Corps Member. We have benefited greatly from their assistance to help build our program and share the message about preventing nonpoint source pollution. Among our current Member's duties, they have also been provided the opportunity to implement a project that would have never been possible without the support of MWCC and the Montana Department of Environmental Quality. Using funding from these organizations, our Member is working with private property owners to restore native riparian habitat to a perennial stream—Pattee Creek. The creek has been so significantly altered over the years that many agencies have written it off as a lost cause. The stream is channelized, and the banks are mostly urban lawns that are mowed to the water's edge. Nevertheless, the project reach provides habitat for westslope cutthroat trout and Columbia spotted frogs, among other wildlife species. By restoring habitat through an urban area, we are able to demonstrate to our community that healthy riparian corridors not only provide amenities for wildlife, but also help to mitigate nonpoint source pollution.

MWCC's program provides an opportunity for Members to develop and execute projects, giving them ownership in their work. We thank you for funding past efforts and strongly urge you to fund MWCC's proposal for 2023.

Respectfully,

Tracy Campbell
Superintendent

Supplemental Attachment 1

Attachment A - Watershed Fund Impacts

2021 IMPACTS

Connect

MWCC's **Annual Meeting** hosted more than 150 conservation leaders who participated in our half-day meeting and funders workshop.

Our new **Lunchtime Conservation Conversations Series** is connecting professionals and leaders throughout the state through a monthly dialogue on natural resource topics.

MWCC's **new website** serves as an improved directory for **conservation contacts, training and events calendars, conservation job postings, and watershed conservation funding**.

More than 1,500 subscribers connect to **MWCC's biweekly Watershed Newsletter** for access to the latest news and resources that help advance watershed conservation across Montana.

Support

The **MWCC Watershed Fund** provides funding to Montana's community-based conservation organizations to support capacity needs and on-the-ground projects that improve watershed health. In 2021, we provided **37 grants and scholarships totaling more than \$200,000** to local watershed partners

MWCC initiated a 5-year agreement with the Bureau of Land Management to support watershed organizations with planning and implementation of **low-tech process based restoration projects**.

Our fall **Peer-to-Peer Exchange** with Future West provided an opportunity for watershed partners to discuss changes within their communities and landscapes while discussing strategies to build support for addressing future challenges.

MWCC supported program partners and 34 host site organizations in the 10th year of the **Big Sky Watershed Corps**.

Inspire

MWCC presented its biennial **Watershed Stewardship Awards** to three recipients whose contributions have created lasting impacts in their watersheds. These recipients included: the Blackfeet Nation's Ksik Stakii Project, Jeff Ryan of the Lewis and Clark Conservation District, and Heather Mullee Barber of the Bitter Root Water Forum.

Our new short film, **Uniting Montana's Watersheds**, shares the importance of MWCC's coordination efforts in watershed management throughout the state.

MWCC's Impact Stories share the successes of watershed organizations and partnerships, promoting their accomplishments and inspiring others.

Represent

MWCC continues to serve as a **leader and a voice** for Montana's communities to promote locally-driven conservation efforts.

We work with diverse partners and stakeholders to represent the collective needs of community-based conservation groups and build support for watershed health efforts.

This includes work with: the **Big Sky Watershed Corps, Western Collaborative Conservation Network, Montana Forest Action Council, Montana Forest Collaboration Network, Montana Association of Conservation Districts, Montana's Soil Health Outreach Initiative, Montana Beaver Working Group, Natural Resource Grants Working Group, and more**.

MWCC Watershed Fund Impacts: 2018-2021

\$868,000 Awarded

55 Organizations Funded

6,042 Stakeholders Engaged

183 Conservation Practices Implemented

10,293 Acres Improved

385 Stream & Lakeshore Miles Improved



Thank you to the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Bureau of Land Management, Montana Department of Natural Resources & Conservation, Montana Department of Environmental Quality, Cinnabar Foundation, Mosaic, Kendeda Fund, Arthur M. Blank Foundation, Turner Foundation and Wilburforce Foundation for supporting the Watershed Fund.

Supplemental Attachment 2

Attachment B - Big Sky Watershed Corp FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions

BIG SKY WATERSHED CORPS

The BSWC is a partnership between three statewide conservation-based organizations.

Please contact us for more information!



Building and Uniting
Watershed Communities
www.mtwatersheds.org

Terri Nichols

Watershed Programs

Coordinator

406.475.1420
terri@mtwatersheds.org



**MONTANA
ASSOCIATION of
CONSERVATION
DISTRICTS**

Local Common Sense Conservation

www.macdnet.org

Rebecca Boslough
Executive Director

406.443.5711
rebecca@macdnet.org



**MONTANA
CONSERVATION
CORPS**

Tools for Living,
Experience for Life

www.mtcorsps.org

Bryan Wilson
Director

406.587.4475
bryan@mtcorsps.org

The Big Sky Watershed Corps (BSWC) will assist watershed communities to make a measurable difference in local conservation efforts while strengthening the experience of young professionals.

AmeriCorps members will focus on watershed research, planning and project implementation, watershed education, outreach, and community engagement.

A collaborative effort of the Montana Watershed Coordination Council (MWCC), the Montana Association of Conservation Districts (MACD), and the Montana Conservation Corps (MCC), the BSWC will recruit, train and support 46 AmeriCorps members selected by qualifying organizations in Montana and surrounding states.

BENEFITS

What are the benefits of being a host site?

Host sites will gain the assistance of a highly motivated college graduate (multiple members per site is possible) to assist with project implementation and program capacity building. Host supervisors will also benefit from training sessions provided by the program.

What are the benefits of being a corps member?

While in service, a corps member will receive student loan forbearance (for qualified loans), health insurance and a bi weekly living stipend of \$800. Members are also eligible to receive an education award of \$6,945 upon successful completion of the program.

PROGRAM LOGISTICS

Who is administering the Big Sky Watershed Corps?

MCC will disburse corps member stipends, health insurance and benefits and will conduct programmatic monitoring and evaluation.

When will the member start and end their term of service with the host site?

Corps members will complete 1700 hours between January and the end of November

Who will pay for the member's health insurance?

MCC will provide health insurance during the corps member's 10.5 months of service.

What is the frequency and duration of mandatory trainings during a member's service?

Four training events will be provided. There will be three 3-day events and one 2-day event. These include orientation (January), education and outreach skills training (February), technical skills training (May), and a graduation celebration of service (November).

Who covers the cost of the trainings?

Corps member transportation, food, and lodging will be provided by the program for mandatory BSWC training events.

Are trainings included in the 1700 hours that a member will serve? Yes.

BSWC: Frequently Asked Questions

Is vacation and sick leave included in the 1700 hours that a member will serve?

Yes. Corps members receive 5 days of vacation. Hosts determine the timing of vacation/sick leave/holidays.

Who will recruit corps members?

MCC will manage recruiting, however, host sites are encouraged to recommend local individuals for consideration.

Will the host site be involved in the interview process?

Yes. Host sites are responsible for contacting and interviewing candidates that have passed an initial screening by the BSWC, and make all final decisions. If requested, MCC may place members without host site review.

What happens if a member needs to leave the program early?

A corps member can be replaced if less than 15% of the term has been completed [255 hours].

REQUIREMENTS

How much does it cost to host a Big Sky Watershed Corps Member?

Host sites are responsible for a cash cost share of \$12,250 per member. In addition, hosts will provide a vehicle with gas or reimburse corps members for work-related travel.

Is there any funding assistance available to lower the cost share?

Yes, program partners have secured some financial resources to assist host sites that are unable to meet the full match requirement and are committed to identifying other sources of support.

Does the entire cost share need to be paid up front?

No. Half of the cost share is required initially and the second half within the first 6 months. MCC will work with organizations to create an appropriate payment schedule that meets both programmatic and host site needs.

How much supervisory support needs to be provided to a member?

A minimum of 5 hours per week but hosts are encouraged to provide ongoing supervision.

What equipment needs to be provided to a member?

Corps members need suitable office space with a telephone, computer, and internet access.

OBJECTIVES

Can a member be used strictly for daily office tasks?

Activities such as answering the phone, making copies, typing, and filing may be necessary but should not form the focus of a corps member's work.

What objectives must host sites meet?

Corps member activities must help meet core programmatic goals of watershed health and protection, education and outreach, member development, and volunteer generation. Projects that meet all 4 goals will better compete for limited member slots.

What are sample deliverables for program objectives?

Corps member deliverables will include: the number of volunteers recruited, trained, and retained that assist with watershed improvement efforts; the number of miles of waterways improved; the number of data sets collected; and the development and delivery of educational materials/individuals educated, workshops, and events with students and community members.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:
BRYAN WILSON, DIRECTOR-INDIVIDUAL PLACEMENT PROGRAMS
406.587.4475 OR BRYAN@MTCORPS.ORG**

The Big Sky Watershed Corps supports local efforts for healthy watershed communities.

Supplemental Attachment 3

**Attachment C - Big Sky Watershed Corp Host
Site Cost Share RFP and Proposal Form for
2022**

2022 BSWC 319 Host Site Cost Share Support Request for Proposals

The MWCC [Watershed Fund](#) has funding to help local watershed organizations implement DEQ-accepted Watershed Restoration Plans (WRPs) by hosting a [Big Sky Watershed Corps](#) (BSWC) member in 2022. A total of \$30,000 is available. Up to \$6,000 may be awarded to each qualifying organization to help offset the \$12,250 cost share payment for hosting a BSWC member. Award decisions will be based in part on what percentage of the member's time will be dedicated to implementing DEQ-accepted Watershed Restoration Plans and to reducing and preventing nonpoint source pollution. There is a non-federal, 1:1 match requirement that can be met through cash or in-kind contributions.

Proposals are due by 5 pm on Friday, August 6, 2022. Details on how to apply are below. Funding decisions will be made August 20, 2021, so applicants will know whether they have received funding prior to the BSWC Program Host Site Application deadline on Friday, September 3.

The purpose of this funding opportunity is to:

- Provide local watershed organizations with the resources necessary to implement DEQ-accepted WRPs and reduce nonpoint source pollution in their watersheds.
- Increase the capacity of local watershed communities to achieve long-term conservation goals related to improving water quality.
- Build the next generation of conservation leaders in Montana.

Eligibility

Local watershed organizations are eligible to apply for this funding if they plan to host a BSWC member for 2022 and if that member will spend 25% or more of their time on WRP implementation related to preventing or reducing nonpoint source pollution. The greater the amount of time a member will spend on these activities, the greater the amount of funding the host site is eligible for. *Federal agencies, state agencies, and for-profit entities are not eligible.*

Requirements

BSWC members supported with this funding will be required to submit one interim and one final report on their WRP-implementation activities, in early June 2022 and early November 2022, respectively. Reporting will be based on the work plan you outline in your online proposal form. (Details below.) There is a non-federal, 1:1 match requirement that can be met through cash or in-kind contributions.

Qualifying Activities

Activities that qualify for this funding are those that implement a DEQ-accepted WRP, help to reduce or prevent nonpoint source pollution, and employ the [Watershed Approach](#) to conservation. Qualifying activities include, but are not limited to:

- Work on restoration and pollution-prevention projects
- Post-restoration maintenance and monitoring

- Monitoring under a DEQ-approved Sampling and Analysis Plan
- Community outreach
- Volunteer recruitment, management, and retention
- Education
- Creation of education and outreach materials

The following activities do not qualify for this funding:

- Establishing or updating WRPs
- Monitoring not called for in a DEQ-approved Sampling and Analysis Plan
- Work on aspects of a WRP that do not prevent or reduce nonpoint source pollution

How to Apply

Proposals are due by 5 pm on Friday, August 6, 2022. They must be submitted via [this online form](#) in Submittable. This Word document should not be used to apply for funding. *If at all possible, the person who submits your proposal should be the person who will be working most closely with the BSWC member. In most cases, this will be the proposed host site supervisor.*

Please use your organization's existing [Submittable account](#) to fill out the online proposal form. If you do not yet have a Submittable account, please set one up under your organization's name, not under your personal name. If you're new to Submittable, here's a link explaining [how to get started as a submitter](#).

Funding decisions will be made by the end of August, so applicants will know whether they have received funding prior to the BSWC Program Host Site Application deadline on Friday, September 3.

MWCC will announce in February or March 2022 an additional funding opportunity for specific, BSWC member-led, on-the-ground projects to reduce and prevent nonpoint source pollution. Up to \$10,000 may be awarded for these competitive grants, and a total of \$25,000 will be available. These project grants must be distinct from activities funded by host site cost share support dollars.

For more information, contact MWCC Watershed Programs Coordinator Terri Nichols at terri@mtwatersheds.org or (406) 210.1217.

Questions in the Online Proposal Form

1. Proposed Host Site Organization
2. Name of Proposed BSWC Host Site Supervisor
3. Organization Tax ID Number
4. Proposed Host Site Supervisor Phone Number
5. Proposed Host Site Supervisor Email Address
6. Name of Task 1
 - a. A brief title for the first WRP-implementation Task the BSWC member will work on.

7. WRP Section and Page Number Task 1 Will Help Implement
8. Percentage of member time to be spent on Task 1
9. Task 1 Activities *400-word limit*
 - a. Bulleted list of activities the BSWC member will work on to accomplish this Task, including dates and locations of any specific events, where applicable.
10. Task 1 Deliverables *300-word limit*
 - a. Specific, quantifiable deliverables you expect as part of your member's activities under this task. Examples may include Number of Plantings, Feet of Fencing, Stream and Lakeshore Miles Improved, Number of Stakeholders Engaged, Number of Events Hosted, Number of Students Reached, Number of Volunteers Recruited, Number of Newsletters Produced, etc.
11. Name of Task 2 ... **opportunity to add up to 5 tasks total, using the same format as for Task 1 above.**
12. How much cost share funding are you requesting?
13. Briefly describe how you expect a BSWC Member to increase your organization's capacity to implement your WRP and reduce nonpoint source pollution. *300-word limit*
14. (Optional) Describe any additional benefits you anticipate from hosting a BSWC member. *300-word limit*

Supplemental Attachment 4

**Attachment D - Big Sky Watershed Corp
Nonpoint Source Project Support RFP for
2022**



Opportunity for Big Sky Watershed Corps Projects to Reduce and Prevent Nonpoint Source Pollution 2022 Request for Proposals

The MWCC Watershed Fund, in partnership with the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has funding to assist local watershed organizations currently hosting BSWC members with implementing nonpoint source pollution-reduction projects. Proposed projects must impact water bodies listed as impaired on Montana's [2020 List of Impaired Waters](#) and included in a [DEQ-accepted Watershed Restoration Plan \(WRP\)](#). (Scroll down to "Watershed Restoration Plans" to find your basin's WRP on this page.) Projects occurring on or along tributaries of impaired water bodies are also eligible if the proposed project addresses a pollutant listed as an impairment for the downstream water body. *The organization's current BSWC member must submit the proposal for funding, play a lead role in implementing the project, and complete interim and final project reports. Proposals are due by 5 pm on Wednesday, March 16.* Details on how to apply are below.

Up to \$7,000 may be awarded to each recipient. A total of \$26,250 is available for 2022. There is a 60:40 non-federal match funding requirement that can be met through state, local, and private dollars or through state, local, and private in-kind contributions. To come up with your match requirement, use this formula: $(319 \text{ funds requested} / 0.6) - 319 \text{ funds requested} = \text{minimum match requirement}$. Project dollars are awarded on a reimbursement basis, with reimbursement occurring after receipt of interim and final reports in July and November 2021. Projects must be completed by November 1, 2022.

Purpose

The purpose of this funding is to help local watershed organizations accomplish on-the-ground work to reduce and prevent nonpoint source pollution (NPS) as outlined in local WRPs. Additional goals of this funding include:

- Supporting projects that align with local watershed priorities
- Measurably improving natural resources
- Increasing local capacity to reduce and prevent NPS
- Providing professional development experience for BSWC members

Who Qualifies?

Watershed conservation organizations that are increasing the capacity of local communities to advance conservation using the [Watershed Approach](#) and are hosting a BSWC member in 2022 are eligible to apply for this funding opportunity. Qualifying organizations include:

- Watershed groups
- Conservation, irrigation, water quality, and other special districts
- Tribal entities and tribal government agencies
- Non-profits
- Forest collaboratives

Federal agencies, state agencies, individuals, and for-profit entities are not eligible.

Additionally, applying organizations must meet the following criteria:

- Implementing a DEQ-approved WRP with their BSWC member's help. **The BSWC member must be the one to apply for this funding, lead the project, and manage the grant and all reporting.**
- Supporting community-based conservation efforts in Montana
- Be registered with the Montana Secretary of State to do business in the state of Montana
- Have the necessary liability insurance, and be in compliance with the Workers Compensation Act

Eligible Projects. Projects must be consistent with a local WRP and must address an impairment identified on [Montana's 2020 List of Impaired Waters](#).

- Willow planting
- Other riparian vegetation projects
- Fencing projects
- Development of grazing plans
- Maintenance of riparian fencing and/or vegetation
- Browse protection for riparian vegetation
- Beaver mimicry and/or beaver management
- Off-stream water for livestock
- **Other on-the-ground projects that fit the purpose and goals of this funding will be considered**

This funding cannot be used for programs for which the main activities are education and outreach. However, education and outreach directly related to the project being implemented, such as project tours and videos, may be supported if costs do not exceed 10% of the total funding request. Neither food nor administrative costs are covered by this funding.

What Is Required of BSWC Members Who Receive Funding?

Members who receive funding will be expected to report to MWCC on:

- Project implementation and deliverables
- Total project budget, including the required nonfederal match funding
 - Notes on Match funding: Nonfederal cash match may include any funding that does not come from federal government agencies. Nonfederal in-kind match can include volunteer time, host site staff time, board member time, donations of materials or equipment use, etc., as long as these in-kind donations don't come from federal government agencies.
- How the project is building host site capacity and BSWC member skills
- How the member and/or host site plan to use the project in future outreach and communications
- There is no monitoring requirement for funded projects

More detailed information on grant reporting requirements will be provided to members who receive funding.

Projects supported by this funding must secure an agreement between the watershed organization and the landowner on whose property the project is occurring – regardless of whether that landowner is a private individual, organization,



or government entity. Landowner agreements shall address operation and maintenance of the project as well as site access for maintenance and post-implementation monitoring. MWCC has sample landowner agreements available to use as templates if your organization does not already have a template that includes these elements.

Projects occurring on private lands must also provide a description of the project activities and a description of the specific area that may be affected by the project (land use, habitat type, etc.) This information will be used by DEQ and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to determine how to reduce or eliminate any potential effects of a project on endangered species.

For projects that address nutrient (total nitrogen and total phosphorus) and sediment pollutants, members who receive funding must provide sufficient information to allow DEQ to estimate pollutant load reductions for the project. MWCC and DEQ will provide a list of information needed from each funded project and will work with the member on this requirement prior to signing a funding agreement.

Timeline

- **Wednesday, March 16 at 5 pm:** Deadline to submit project proposals.
- If you would like to submit a draft project proposal for review and feedback before the final deadline, please do so by **Monday, March 7 at 5 pm**. *To submit a draft proposal, use the Word version of the Project Support Application Form Questions. Do not submit draft proposals in the online form used for final proposals (details below).*
- **Week of April 4:** MWCC will notify applications about whether they have been awarded funding.
- **Friday, July 29:** Interim reporting forms due to MWCC
- **Monday, November 7:** Final reporting forms due to MWCC

How to Apply

Submit a project proposal by Wednesday, March 16, at 5 pm, via the 2022 BSWC Nonpoint Source Project Support Proposal Form.* Optionally, you may also submit a draft proposal, using the Word document attached at the bottom of this page, by Monday, March 7 at 5 pm, to receive feedback before your final proposal is due.

**The MWCC Watershed Fund uses the online platform [Submittable](#) for all our funding. Check to see if your host site organization has an existing Submittable account. If so, please ensure that you are logged into that same account before clicking on this link or filling out this proposal form. Do not create a new Submittable account or submit proposals using another account. This helps hugely with Watershed Fund tracking, and we appreciate your attention to this detail. To learn more about how to use Submittable, check out this [two-minute video](#).*

Proposals must include:

- A project map that clearly shows the location(s) of proposed project activities
- Location coordinates *in decimal degrees*



-
- A description of how the project implements Best Management Practices from your local WRP
 - A completed spreadsheet of project tasks, deliverables, and timeline for completion, available for download at the bottom of this page and in the Submittable application
 - A proposed project budget spreadsheet, including anticipated nonfederal match and explanations of anticipated expenses, available for download at the bottom of this page and in the Submittable application.
 - Letters of support from key project partners are optional but encouraged.

Review Criteria

MWCC Watershed Fund Reviewers will review all applications based on the following criteria:

- Proposed project implements recommendations from a local WRP
- Proposed project addresses an impaired water body on Montana's 2020 list of impaired waters
- Proposed project directly addresses non-point source pollution in the watershed.
- Proposed project provides additional natural resource or conservation benefits.
- Details of project implementation included in project map and in tasks, deliverables, and timeline spreadsheet align with stated project goals for reducing nonpoint source pollution and providing other benefits.
- Project can reasonably be completed by November 1, 2022, taking into consideration the BSWC member's time, the project location, landowner involvement, member and host site expertise, and other factors.
- Project includes a clear plan for evaluating project effectiveness in meeting the WRP, NPS, and other outcomes.
- Project demonstrates an appropriate level of community engagement
- Project builds the capacity of the host site to implement more NPS projects in the future and/or to meet other WRP goals.
- Role of BSWC member in the project is appropriate for both the project and for the member's professional development.
- Project partners and partner expectations are clearly defined.
- Partner support demonstrated through letters of support.
- Project budget is clear and reasonable for the success of the project.

Questions?

Potential applicants are encouraged to contact Watershed Programs Coordinator Terri Nichols with project ideas and questions. Terri will also review and provide feedback on draft proposals submitted by Monday, March 7 at 5 pm using the Word version of the proposal form questions provided below. Including with your draft proposal a draft budget using the BSWC NPS Project Proposal Budget Template is strongly encouraged.

Terri Nichols

terri@mtwatersheds.org

(406) 210-1217