



2022 CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

319 NONPOINT SOURCE PROJECT PROGRAM



Madison River, Photo by Donnie Sexton

August 2, 2021

Prepared by:

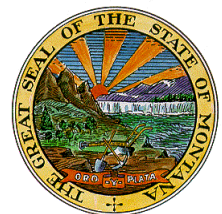
Watershed Protection Section

Montana Department of Environmental Quality

1520 E. Sixth Avenue

P.O. Box 200901

Helena, MT 59620-0901



2022 Call for Applications

Schedule

Date	Event
August 5, 2021	Issue of 2022 Call for Applications
Until Wednesday, 10/27/2021 at 5:00 pm	DEQ will ensure staff availability for answering questions, reviewing draft applications, and providing other assistance.
Friday, 10/29/2021, 5:00 pm	Signed applications and all attachments due to DEQ by 5:00 pm
Wednesday, 11/17/2021	Project sponsor presentations and Agency Review Panel discussion
Friday, 12/3/2021, 5:00 pm	Notice of Intent to Award sent to project sponsors
12/6/2021 through 1/31/2022	Contract development
July/August 2022	Funding becomes available

Unanticipated Program Changes

Information in this Call may be subject to change based on unforeseen changes to DEQ and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) priorities. If changes become necessary, DEQ will post the changes on the 319 Projects Program website <http://deq.mt.gov/Water/SurfaceWater/319Projects>.

PURPOSE

The 319 Nonpoint Source Program provides funding for design and implementation of projects that reduce and prevent nonpoint source pollution in impaired waterbodies while improving water quality and restoring natural stream and lake processes.

SPONSOR ELIGIBILITY

The following entities may be eligible to receive funding:

- Nonprofit organizations having a tax-exempt declaration of 501(c)(3) from the Internal Revenue Service.
- Governmental entities. A governmental entity is a local, state, or federal organization that has been established and authorized by law.

In addition, all project sponsors must meet the following qualifications:

- Have a current DUNS number. Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) numbers may be obtained from the following website: <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform/index.jsp>
- Be registered with the federal System for Award Management (SAM). The SAM registration website is <https://sam.gov/SAM/>
- Be registered with the Montana Secretary of State. All project sponsors must be registered with the Montana Secretary of State to do business in the state of Montana. Registration with the Secretary of State may be completed via the following website: <https://sosmt.gov/business/start-maintain-grow/>
- Have the necessary liability insurance and be in compliance with the Workers Compensation Act. Project sponsors will be required to demonstrate proof of liability insurance and compliance with the Workers Compensation Act prior to being awarded funding. Contact Cynthia Dillon at Cynthia.Dillon@mt.gov for guidance on the type and level of insurance coverage necessary for your project.
- Have sufficient technical and managerial resources available to facilitate completion of the project.

PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

All projects must:

- Address nonpoint source pollution.
- Implement actions consistent with recommendations in the 2017 Montana Nonpoint Source Management Plan (<http://deq.mt.gov/Portals/112/Water/WPB/Nonpoint/Publications/Annual%20Reports/2017NPSManagementPlanFinal.pdf>).
- Implement activities or practices identified in a DEQ-accepted Watershed Restoration Plan (WRP). If you do not have a DEQ-accepted WRP by the application deadline, you must submit a draft prior to applying for funding. DEQ staff will review the draft and estimate the likelihood of it being ready for DEQ acceptance prior to January 31, 2022. See <http://deq.mt.gov/water/surfacewater/watershedrestoration> for information on existing plans.
- Address impairments identified on Montana's 2020 List of Impaired Waters. In some instances, projects on streams that are not listed as impaired may be acceptable. These projects must reduce pollutant loading to an impaired, downstream receiving water OR protect existing uses from becoming impaired.
- Be completed within 3 years.

In addition, the following project-specific requirements must be met.

- Projects addressing stream flow through improved water use efficiency must include reasonable assurance that unused water will remain in the stream (e.g., through a change of use to instream flow, or a signed commitment from the water right holder).

2022 Call for Applications

- Projects involving grazing management (e.g., riparian fencing, creation of riparian pastures) must include a grazing management plan as a task deliverable.
- Projects involving riparian or wetland buffer creation must have a minimum buffer width of 25 feet, as measured from the water's edge. If the buffer must be less than 25 feet in some places to accommodate bridges, water gaps or other infrastructure, the buffer should be made proportionately wider in other areas.

The following activities are ***NOT*** eligible for funding:

- Development of a Watershed Restoration Plan (WRP)
- Activities required as a condition of a point source (MDPES) discharge permit
- Watershed characterization studies
- Pollutant source identification
- Water quality monitoring, except for monitoring the effectiveness of funded projects
- Statewide education and outreach campaigns
- Projects whose primary purpose is to protect infrastructure from stream channel migration
- Use of non-native plant species in restoration projects

COMPLIANCE WITH PREVAILING WAGE LAWS

It is the responsibility of project sponsors/contractors to comply with State or Federal prevailing wage laws and ensure their subcontractors do the same. If the nature of the work performed, or services provided, under a contract resulting from this RFA meet the statutory definition of a "public works contract" in §18-2-401, MCA, and exceeds \$25,000, payment of prevailing wages is required. Work performed may fall under the wage determinations for [Heavy Construction or Non-Construction](#) as defined by the Commissioner of the Montana Department of Labor and Industry. Projects funded in whole or in part with federal funding require payment of the higher of the state or federal wage rate. Questions related to prevailing wage rates may be addressed directly to the following:

Compliance and Investigations Bureau

1805 Prospect Avenue

PO Box 201503

Helena, MT 59620-1503

(406) 444-6543

DLIERDWage@mt.gov

Website: <http://erd.dli.mt.gov/labor-standards/public-contracts-prevailing-wage-law>

The guidance below is intended to help you anticipate whether prevailing wage laws may apply to your project.

In accordance with §18-2-401 through §18-2-432, MCA, and all associated administrative rules:

- **Montana Resident Preference.** Unless superseded by federal law, Montana law requires that contractors and subcontractors give preference to the employment of Montana residents for any public works contract in excess of \$25,000 for construction or non-construction services. The Commissioner of the Montana Department of Labor and Industry has established the resident requirements in accordance with §18-2-403 and §18-2-409, MCA.
- **Standard Prevailing Rate of Wages.** Montana law requires that all public works contracts greater than \$25,000, contain a provision defining the following:
 - job classification;
 - applicable standard prevailing wage rate, including fringe benefits, travel, per diem;
 - and zone pay that the Contractors, subcontractors, and employers shall pay during the public works contract.

2022 Call for Applications

In accordance with §18-2-417, MCA, any public works contract that has a potential term of 30 months or more must allow for adjustment to the prevailing wage rates as noted below:

- If the initial contract term is for more than 12 months, the standard prevailing wage rate paid to workers under a contract must be adjusted 12 months after the date of contract award. The amount of the adjustment must be a 3% increase. The adjustment must be made and applied every 12 months for the term of the contract. This adjustment is the sole responsibility of Contractor and no cost adjustment in the contract will be allowed to fulfill this requirement.
- If the initial contract term is 12 months with options to renew, the contract is subject to the 3% adjustment when the contract length becomes more than 30 months. The 3% rate increase becomes effective upon the second renewal, and the 3% is paid starting in the third year of the contract beginning with the 25th month. The adjustment must be made and applied every 12 months thereafter for the term of the contract. This adjustment is the sole responsibility of Contractor and no cost adjustment in the contract will be allowed to fulfill this requirement.
- **Notice of Wages and Benefits.** In accordance with §18-2-406, MCA, all contractors, subcontractors, and employers who are performing work or providing services under a public works contract must post in a prominent and accessible site on the project staging area or work area, no later than the first day of work and continuing for the entire duration of the Contract, a legible statement of all wages and fringe benefits to be paid to the employees in compliance with §18-2-423, MCA.
- **Wage Rates, Pay Schedule, and Records.** In accordance with §18-2-423, MCA, employees receiving an hourly wage must be paid on a weekly basis. Each contractor, subcontractor, and employer shall maintain payroll records in a manner readily capable of being certified for submission for not less than three years after the Contractor's, subcontractor's, or employer's completion of work on the public works contract.

FUNDING PRIORITIES

The DEQ Nonpoint Source Program recognizes that some projects are more effective and efficient at reducing nonpoint source pollution. DEQ will prioritize projects for funding based on how well they meet the priorities outlined in the table below. The examples are provided for reference and might not apply in all circumstances. Please contact a DEQ 319 Project Manager to discuss how the priorities might apply to your specific project. Note the value given each priority in the Scoring Sheet (Attachment A).

NPS Priority	Good Example	Poor Example
Nonpoint source goals for the project are clearly defined, measurable and attainable.	Quantifiable activities and impacts: 1200 feet of riparian exclusion fencing, 5,000 willow cuttings and 5 off-stream watering facilities will be installed to restore riparian vegetation and address 30% of the eroding streambanks along Trout Creek.	A vague description: The watershed group plans on designing and implementing 3 sediment reduction projects within the watershed.
Project costs are reasonable as compared to anticipated results.	The watershed group will use \$30,000 and 200 hours of volunteer labor to relocate the feedlot off the banks of the creek and replant the riparian area with 7,000 locally harvested willow stakes.	Overpriced and minimal nonpoint source pollution prevention: The watershed group will use \$70,000 to create a 10-foot-wide grass buffer along 100 feet of streambank adjacent to a golf course.

2022 Call for Applications

NPS Priority	Good Example	Poor Example
Pre-project planning is sufficient to ensure the project will move forward if funded.	The Conservation District has been working with the landowner for several years to develop a project that will keep the ranch operational while at the same time reducing nonpoint source pollution. The landowner is working with the local County Extension Agent to develop a grazing management plan. The CD will hire an engineering firm to design a new floodplain and stream channel to replace 700 feet of historically straightened creek. The local FWP Fish Biologist and the Floodplain Coordinator have been out to the site to discuss permitting needs. The CD has successfully managed 3 previous restoration projects.	Minimal planning and no experience managing large projects: The Conservation District would like \$250,000 to do a stream restoration project on Trout Creek. They have a couple of potential landowners in mind and have been talking about applying for planning funding from DNRC. This will be the district's first stream project.
The project involves appropriate partners and has significant landowner and stakeholder support, as evidenced by commitments of time and/or resources.	The watershed group is seeking \$195,000 to restore and protect a 300-acre beaver complex. The high school biology club will provide 25,000 willow stems, the landowner has signed a perpetual conservation easement with NRCS, the local rod and gun club has raised \$25,000 to pay for livestock fencing and off-stream watering facilities, and the ditch company has agreed to monitor changes in creek flow before and after the project. The landowner and several members of the high school biology club come to the Agency Review Panel Meeting to express support for the project.	Ineffective partners and little stakeholder support: A homeowners association straightened a creek and bulldozed a wetland to create a community park. The creek is migrating into the park and threatening a county road. The local watershed group is seeking \$180,000 for a bioengineered bank stabilization project to stop the migration. The association is willing to contribute \$500 and one letter of support. The county has not been contacted yet.
The Project is an appropriate next step for making progress towards removing a pollutant/waterbody combination from Montana's 2020 Impaired Waters List.	The TMDL indicates that 95% of the excess sediment in the creek comes from road runoff from a 1.3 mile stretch of road that runs right along the creek bottom. The remaining 5% comes from a small, overgrazed horse pasture near the mouth of the creek. The Conservation District is seeking \$150,000 to help fund a U.S. Forest Service project that would relocate the road up and out of the creek bottom.	The TMDL indicates that 95% of the excess sediment in the creek comes from road runoff from a 1.3 mile stretch of road that runs right along the creek bottom. The remaining 5% comes from a small, overgrazed horse pasture near the mouth of the creek. The Conservation District is seeking \$70,000 to fence the horses out of the creek and build a new barn on higher ground.
The project will promote self-maintaining natural, ecological, and social processes that will protect water quality.	The watershed group is seeking \$150,000 to remove 350 linear feet of riprap, reconnect 23 acres of floodplain and install livestock fencing, off-stream watering sources and native willows to create a 50 ft riparian buffer.	The watershed group is seeking \$75,000 to install rock barbs to keep the creek from eroding into a hay field.
The project will lead to long-term, sustainable reductions in nonpoint source pollution.	The watershed group is seeking \$250,000 to connect waterfront homes to a community wastewater treatment system.	The watershed group is seeking \$50,000 to pay for a one-time pumping of all septic tanks within 1,500 feet of the lakeshore.

BIGGER PICTURE CONSIDERATIONS

Nonpoint source pollution prevention projects often have benefits to natural resources and local communities, that extend beyond simply reducing pollution. In recognition of the potential for greater good, DEQ provides additional consideration for projects that address environmental justice, climate change/adaptation, and impacts to downstream communities.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE (EJ)

EPA uses a two-part standard for defining and evaluating environmental justice.

- **Fair Treatment:** the same degree of protection from environmental and health hazards for all people regardless of race, color, national origin or income.
- **Meaningful Involvement:** equal access to the decision-making process to have a healthy environment in which to live, learn and work, regardless of race, color, national origin or income.

DEQ will encourage fair treatment and meaningful involvement in 319 Projects by awarding additional points in scoring to projects that address the following priorities:

EJ Priority	Good Examples	Poor Example
The project will improve or create public access to a healthy environment.	Removal of mine tailings that have been contaminating the local swimming hole. Riparian buffer creation adjacent to government-subsidized housing.	An in-stream habitat restoration project on a private spring creek where the landowner charges people \$100 per day to come and fish.
The project will have a public benefit in a county where 15% or more of the population lives below the poverty level.	Projects that benefit the public in the following counties: Big Horn, Blaine, Chouteau, Deer Lodge, Garfield, Glacier, Golden Valley, Hill, Lake, Liberty, Lincoln, Meagher, Mineral, Musselshell, Pondera, Powell, Roosevelt, Rosebud, Sanders, Silver Bow, Toole, Wheatland.*	Projects that benefit the public in counties other than those listed in the cell to the left.
The project will benefit historically underserved populations (e.g. minority populations, people with disabilities).	Relocating a large horse corral off a stream bank to reduce <i>E. coli</i> loading before the stream flows onto tribal lands. Replacement of a muddy trail through a wetland complex with an ADA-compliant walking bridge.	Riparian buffer creation on a golf course. Culvert replacement in a private resort community. Decommissioning an ADA-accessible trail.

*(Source: Montana Department of Commerce, Census and Economic Information Center. www.ceic.mt.gov Accessed 06/01/2021. Information current as of 2019.)

CLIMATE CHANGE/ADAPTATION

There is strong scientific evidence indicating that the earth’s surface temperatures are warming and precipitation regimes are shifting. A changing climate will have a significant impact on water quality, affecting the timing and quantity of the precipitation and snowmelt that feeds our rivers, the temperature of lakes and streams, and nutrient cycling within aquatic environments. Some nonpoint source pollution prevention projects have the ability to lessen the impacts

2022 Call for Applications

of climate change on water quality and quantity. DEQ will encourage these types of projects by awarding additional points in scoring to projects that address the following priorities:

Climate Priority	Good Examples	Poor Example
The project will improve climate change resilience for communities, native plants, wildlife, or ecosystems.	Adding meanders and adjacent wetlands to a previously straightened section of stream, helping to mitigate downstream flooding and late season drought, while reducing stream temperature and providing cold water refuge for native trout. Planting a diverse array of native shrub and forb species in a riparian buffer to promote biodiversity.	Streambank armoring. Establishing a monoculture along a streambank.
The project will restore or protect cool, late-season flow.	Planting woody vegetation and using beaver dam analog structures to raise the local water table and encourage beaver recolonization.	Replacing an undersized culvert with a bridge.

IMPACTS TO DOWNSTREAM COMMUNITIES

The effects of nonpoint source pollution are often felt by downstream point source dischargers (e.g. cities and industry), as lack of assimilative capacity in polluted streams often results in tighter permit limits and increased treatment costs. Nonpoint source pollution can also increase the cost and complexity of treatment for communities that rely on streams as a source of drinking water. In recognition of this fact, DEQ will award additional points in scoring to projects that address the following priorities:

Priority for Addressing Impacts to Downstream Communities	Good Examples	Poor Example
The project will reduce pollutant loading above a permitted point source discharge in a way that could increase assimilative capacity in the receiving water.	Relocating a feedlot straddling a creek a quarter mile upstream from the discharge point for the city wastewater treatment plant.	Developing a grazing management plan for a 2-acre, 3-horse farm located on a tributary stream, 12 miles upstream of the nearest permitted point source.
The project will help protect a drinking water source.	Mine waste is removed from the floodplain a few hundred yards from a town's drinking water intake.	Culvert replacement on a tiny headwaters stream.

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

DEQ recognizes that developing good projects often requires a considerable amount of time and effort up front to build relationships and trust with individual landowners and stakeholder groups. To promote the development of future projects, DEQ is encouraging project sponsors to apply for up to \$5,000 in 319 funding in their project application for education and outreach to develop and capitalize on these critical relationships.

PROJECT EFFECTIVENESS EVALUATION

Each project, regardless of its nature (engineering, education and outreach, on-the-ground implementation, etc), needs to be evaluated upon completion to determine its impact on reducing nonpoint source pollution. Project effectiveness evaluations should not be elaborate or expensive but should provide a reasonable estimate of the progress that was made. For on-the-ground projects that address nitrogen, phosphorus or sediment, project sponsors will be required to estimate pollutant load reductions or to gather the information necessary for DEQ staff to generate the estimates. For education and outreach efforts, project sponsors should provide a reasonable method for estimating the effect the activities had on raising awareness, increasing knowledge, or improving the skill and ability of participants to address nonpoint source pollution.

PROJECT ADMINISTRATION AND REPORTING

319 funds are administered as contracts. Payment is on a reimbursement basis. Semi-annual reporting and a final report are required. A maximum of 10% of the total 319 funds requested may be used to pay for project administration. Project administration costs include things like billing and reporting, incidentals and overhead, phone and internet, office space/rent, office supplies, insurance, etc.

FUNDING AVAILABILITY AND COST SHARE

Funding for this program comes from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) under Section 319(h) of the Federal Clean Water Act (CWA). DEQ anticipates approximately \$1,000,000 will be available for this Call, to be distributed in June/July/August of 2022.

Project sponsors are required to meet a minimum 40% cost share (also known as match) for the project. Match can be from private, state, local, or non-profit sources; it cannot be from federal sources. Use the following formula to calculate the amount of non-federal match required for your project.

$$[(319 \text{ dollars requested})/.60] - (319 \text{ dollars requested}) = \text{required non-federal match}$$

FUNDING POTS

Funding will be divided into 3 pots, with unused funds from the Focus Watershed and Mini-Grant pots to be redistributed into the General Projects pot.

General Projects

Estimated Total Amount Available: \$400,000 + any unused funds from the other two pots.
Recommended Range for Funding Requests: \$10,000-\$250,000

Specific Eligibility Requirements: None

Focus Watershed Projects

Estimated Total Amount Available: \$500,000
Recommended Range for Funding Requests: \$10,000-\$250,000

Specific Eligibility Requirements: Projects located in the Bitterroot watershed.

2022 Call for Applications

Mini-Grant Programs

Estimated Total Amount Available: \$100,000

Recommended Range for Funding Requests: \$30,000-\$60,000

Specific Eligibility Requirements

DEQ intends to fund up to 3 mini-grant or sub-award programs to provide small grants for education and outreach, local conservation organization capacity building, and small on-the-ground restoration projects. Mini-grant programs must have a statewide focus, and activities funded or used as non-federal match for mini-grant programs must generally meet the same project eligibility requirements as all other 319-funded projects. Specifically, mini-grant activities must address nonpoint source pollution and should, to the extent practicable:

- Implement actions consistent with recommendations in the 2017 Montana Nonpoint Source Management Plan (<http://deq.mt.gov/Portals/112/Water/WPB/Nonpoint/Publications/Annual%20Reports/2017NPSManagementPlanFinal.pdf>).
- Address impairments identified on Montana's 2020 List of Impaired Waters.
- Be completed within 3 years.
- Give priority to activities or practices identified in a DEQ-accepted Watershed Restoration Plan (WRP). See <http://deq.mt.gov/water/surfacewater/watershedrestoration> for information on existing plans.

The following activities cannot be funded or reported as non-federal match for mini-grant programs:

- Development of a Watershed Restoration Plan (WRP)
- Activities required as a condition of a point source (MDPES) discharge permit
- Watershed characterization studies
- Pollutant source identification
- Water quality monitoring, except for monitoring the effectiveness of funded projects
- Projects whose primary purpose is to protect infrastructure from natural stream channel migration

Specific Application Instructions

Project sponsors must complete Part A *and* Part C of the FY2022 Application Form. Mini-grant proposals will only compete against each other and will be scored using the Mini-Grant Scoring Sheet. **Review the Mini-Grant Scoring Sheet carefully! It reflects specific priorities not captured elsewhere in the FY2022 Call for Applications.**

HOW TO APPLY

The fillable application forms are available on DEQ's website: <http://deq.mt.gov/Water/SurfaceWater/319Projects>. **NEW** We now have a separate application form and scoring sheet (Attachments A-2 and C-3, respectively) for mini-grant programs. This will help eliminate past confusion and ensure a competitive process for awarding funding.

Adobe Reader software is required and can be downloaded for free: <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>.

Signed applications and required materials must be received by DEQ by 5:00 pm on Friday, 10/29/2021.

Project sponsors must submit all application materials, including attachments, in either PDF or Microsoft Office Suite compatible file format. DO NOT send electronic files through Dropbox, WeTransfer, Google Docs, or any other commercially available file transfer service. Electronic documents smaller than seven megabytes (7 MB) may be delivered via email to Mark Ockey: mockey@mt.gov. Electronic documents larger than seven megabytes (7 MB) must be delivered using the State of Montana's File Transfer Service: transfer.mt.gov. Signup instructions are available at <https://transfer.mt.gov/Home/Instructions>.

2022 Call for Applications

Contact Mark Ockey to make sure that all documents were received: mockey@mt.gov or 406-465-0039

Application Procedure Checklist

- Thoroughly read the Call for Applications (it changes somewhat each year).
- Contact a member of the DEQ Nonpoint Source Program to discuss your project. *
- Fill out the application.
- Contact a member of the DEQ Nonpoint Source Program and request a review of your draft application.*
- By 5:00 pm on Friday, October 29, 10/29/2021, submit a final, signed copy of your application, with all required attachments.
- Participate in the Agency Review Panel meeting on Wednesday, November 17, 2021.

**These steps are optional, but strongly recommended. They will likely improve the competitiveness of your application.*

Resources

Previous project sponsors have found that using assistance from DEQ's Nonpoint Source Program staff has significantly improved the quality and competitiveness of their application. Staff are typically able to provide the following assistance:

- Answer questions about this Call and the funding source
- Evaluate the extent to which your proposed project is likely to be a good fit for the Nonpoint Source Program
- Suggest possible metrics for evaluating project success
- Review and recommend outreach and education activities
- Review and comment on draft applications*

**Please provide several days of advanced notice when requesting these services*

DEQ Nonpoint Source Program staff

- Mark Ockey, mockey@mt.gov
- Eric Trum, etrum@mt.gov
- Hannah Riedl, Hannah.Riedl@mt.gov

The following information may also be useful in preparing your application:

- The 2017 Montana Nonpoint Source Management Plan (NPS Plan):
<http://deq.mt.gov/Portals/112/Water/WPB/Nonpoint/Publications/Annual%20Reports/2017NPSManagementPlanFinal.pdf>
- A map showing watersheds with approved total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) and final TMDL documents:
<http://deq.mt.gov/Water/SurfaceWater/TMDL/tpamap>
- Information on existing Watershed Restoration Plans (WRPs) and WRP development:
<http://deq.mt.gov/water/surfacewater/watershedrestoration>
- The Clean Water Act Information Center (CWAIC) database is available to help you search for information on the impairment and TMDL status of Montana waterbodies. The database can be searched online at
www.cwaic.mt.gov

APPLICATION REVIEW AND CONTRACTING

All applications are reviewed by an Agency Review Panel, by DEQ, and by EPA. Successful project sponsors are then offered a contract for 319 funding.

AGENCY REVIEW PANEL

Applications will be reviewed and evaluated by an Agency Review Panel on Wednesday, November 17, 2021, in Helena. The Panel will be chaired by DEQ and will include representatives from various state and federal agencies. The Agency Review Panel meeting is open to the public, and project sponsors will be offered an opportunity to present projects to the Panel. Presentations will be limited in time, and if unable to attend in person, a phone-in option will be made available. Please check the DEQ 319 Projects website (<http://deq.mt.gov/Water/SurfaceWater/319Projects>) for potential schedule changes due to the evolving COVID19 situation.

A scoring sheet will be used during the evaluation process and is included as **Attachment A**. The scoring sheet is intended to support the Agency Review Panel discussion. However, it is not a final decision-making matrix. The Panel will use the scoring sheet to make general recommendations to DEQ regarding funding levels and project quality. Applicants are encouraged to review the scoring sheet and consider how well their application meets these individual criteria.

DEQ REVIEW

DEQ will use the recommendations provided by the Agency Review Panel to help inform internal review and decision-making. Following internal review, and prior to 5:00pm Friday, December 3, 2021, DEQ will send out notices of intent to award to successful project sponsors, and notices of determination (not to award) to unsuccessful project sponsors.

If you receive a Notice of Intent to Award, DEQ staff will contact you and begin working with you to develop a scope of work, consistent with the project information found in your application, with DEQ and Agency Review Panel comments, and with DEQ and EPA fiscal procedures and requirements. DEQ will conduct an Endangered Species Act review to establish necessary parameters for project compliance with the Act.

CONTRACTING

319 funds are administered as contracts. Contracts are legally binding agreements that identify specific products or work that must be completed prior to receiving reimbursement. Expenses and match incurred by project sponsors prior to the signing of a contract, and after the expiration date of the contract, CANNOT be applied to the contract.

Payment requests are on a reimbursement basis. Project sponsors shall request payment no more frequently than monthly and no less frequently than semi-annually. With each payment request, project sponsors are required to submit a report that includes a description of the work completed and justification for expenses incurred. At a minimum, sponsors must submit semi-annual (interim) reports, yearly annual reports, and a final report. Templates and reporting guidance for these reports can be found at: <http://deq.mt.gov/Water/SurfaceWater/NonpointSources> under the "Guidance for Funding Recipients (e.g., status/final reports)" dropdown tab. Projects are expected to be completed within 3 years of the date the contract is signed.

EPA Review

The EPA has final approval authority over all projects selected by DEQ for funding. EPA reviews the final scopes of work for consistency with the 2017 Montana Nonpoint Source Management Plan, consistency with EPA NPS program guidelines, and overall impacts on water quality. Upon receipt of EPA approval, DEQ will issue contracts to successful project sponsors (anticipated in July or August of 2022).

ATTACHMENTS

Attachments are available for download on DEQ's website: <http://deq.mt.gov/Water/SurfaceWater/NonpointSources>.

Adobe Reader software is required and can be downloaded for free: <http://get.adobe.com/reader/>

Attachment A – Scoring Sheets

A-1 – General and Focus Watershed Scoring Sheet

A-2 – Mini-Grant Program Scoring Sheet

The scoring sheets (A-1 and A-2) are intended to support the Agency Review Panel discussion. However, they are not a final decision-making matrix. The Agency Review Panel will use the scoring sheets to make general recommendations to DEQ regarding funding levels and project quality. Project Sponsors are encouraged to review the applicable scoring sheet and consider how well their application meets these individual criteria.

Attachment B – Application Form Instructions

B-1 – General and Focus Watershed Application Form Instructions

B-2 – Mini-Grant Program Application Form Instructions

Attachment C – Application Forms

C-1 – General and Focus Watershed Application Form

C-2 – Supplemental Project Application Form

C-3 – Mini-Grant Program Application Form

ATTACHMENT A-1 – FY2022 GENERAL AND FOCUS WATERSHED SCORING SHEET

(To guide review team discussion)

Project Name: _____

Project Sponsor: _____

Reviewed By: _____

	Max Score	Points
Planning and Preparation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is pre-project planning sufficient to ensure the success of the project? 	(15)	
Community Participation and Support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is landowner commitment clearly evident? (2 pts) Does the project involve appropriate partners? (2 pts) Is there significant stakeholder support? (2 pts) 	(6)	
Water Quality Benefits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the project an appropriate next step either for making progress towards removing a pollutant/waterbody combination from Montana’s 2018 Impaired Waters list or preventing a healthy waterbody from becoming impaired? (10 pts) Is the project addressing a major local source of NPS pollution? (5 pts) Are NPS pollution goals for the project clearly defined, measurable and attainable? (5 pts) Are project costs reasonable when compared to NPS pollution reduction or prevention benefits? (5 pts) 	(25)	
Evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the plan include appropriate metrics for evaluating project effectiveness? 	(10)	
Sustainability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will the project create long-term, sustainable reductions in NPS pollution? (10 pts) Will the project promote self-maintaining natural, ecological, and social processes that protect water quality? (10 pts) 	(20)	
Education and Outreach (related to the project) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will the project have educational benefit? 	(10)	
Environmental Justice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will the project improve or create public access to a healthy environment? (2 pts) Will the project have a public benefit in a county where 15% or more of the population lives below the poverty level? Counties include: Big Horn, Blaine, Chouteau, Deer Lodge, Garfield, Glacier, Golden Valley, Hill, Lake, Liberty, Lincoln, Meagher, Mineral, Musselshell, Pondera, Powell, Roosevelt, Rosebud, Sanders, Silver Bow, Toole and Wheatland. (2 pts) Will the project benefit historically underserved populations (e.g. minority populations, people with disabilities)? (2 pts) 	(6)	
Climate Change/Adaptation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will the project improve climate change resilience for communities, native plants, wildlife, or ecosystems? (2 pts) Will the project restore or protect cool, late-season flow? (2 pts) 	(4)	
Impacts to Downstream Communities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will the project reduce pollutant loading above a permitted point source discharge in a way that could increase assimilative capacity in the receiving water? (2 pts) Will the project help protect a drinking water source? (2 pts) 	(4)	
	Total	

Reviewer Comments

DEQ staff will take these comments into consideration when developing final funding recommendations to send to EPA. DEQ may also share your comments, in whole or in part, with project sponsors and the public. Thanks again for giving of your time and knowledge!

Funding Recommendation

FF = Fully Fund, **PF+** = Partial Fund (>50%), **PF-** = Partial fund (<50%), **NF** = Not Fund

Project Comments

Separate Education and Outreach Activities *(fill out only once per applicant)*

If the applicant is requesting funds for education and outreach activities that are not directly tied to an on-the-ground project, please comment on the following:

- Will the activities promote or facilitate future efforts to reduce nonpoint source pollution?
- Do the activities target the most appropriate audience(s) with an appropriate delivery method?

Task and Budget Recommendations

ATTACHMENT A-2 – FY2022 MINI-GRANT PROGRAM SCORING SHEET

(To guide review team discussion)

Project Name: _____

Project Sponsor: _____

Reviewed By: _____

	Max Score	Points
Planning and Preparation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is pre-project planning sufficient to ensure the success of the project? (5 pts) Does the project involve appropriate partners? (5 pts) Is the project sponsor able to implement the program with minimal oversight? (5 pts) 	(15)	
Target Audience (potential recipients of the mini-grants) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the target audience well-defined? (5 pts) Is the target audience capable of having a meaningful impact on NPS pollution? (5 pts) Is there adequate interest to ensure full use of requested funding within a 3-year period? (5 pts) Is the proposed program non-duplicative of existing programs? (5 pts) 	(20)	
Program Delivery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will mini-grants be awarded in a competitive manner? (5 pts) Is the proposed oversight process adequate to ensure completion of individual mini-grant projects? (5 pts) 	(10)	
Water Quality Benefits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will the program increase local capacity or interest for addressing NPS pollution? (10 pts) Will the program create long-lasting change in social norms or attitudes toward addressing NPS pollution? (10 pts) Are project costs reasonable when compared to NPS pollution reduction or prevention benefits? (5 pts) 	(25)	
Evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the plan include appropriate metrics for quantifying the effects of individual mini-grant projects? (5 pts) Does the plan include appropriate metrics for evaluating the effectiveness of the mini-grant program as a whole? (5 pts) 	(10)	
Environmental Justice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will the program encourage participation from historically underserved populations (e.g. minority populations, people with disabilities)? (3 pts) Will the program build capacity for addressing NPS pollution in Montana communities east of the continental divide? (3 pts) Will the program help communities affected by legacy sources of pollution (e.g. communities with superfund sites or impacts from abandoned mine lands)? (3 pts) 	(9)	
Climate Change/Adaptation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will the program encourage efforts to improve climate change resilience? (3 pts) 	(3)	
Impacts to Downstream Communities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will the program encourage cooperation between permitted point source dischargers and managers of NPS pollution on efforts to improve water quality? (4) Will the program encourage protection of drinking water sources? (4) 	(8)	
Total		

Reviewer Comments

DEQ staff will take these comments into consideration when developing final funding recommendations to send to EPA. DEQ may also share your comments, in whole or in part, with project sponsors and the public. Thanks again for giving of your time and knowledge!

Funding Recommendation

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Project Comments

Task and Budget Recommendations