2026 Nonpoint Source Pollution Reduction Applications

Agency Review Panel Summary and DEQ Funding Decisions

On April 1-2, 2026, DEQ convened an Agency Review Panel to discuss and provide feedback to DEQ on the Final Applications submitted under the 2026 Nonpoint Source Pollution Reduction Call For Applications. DEQ wishes to express sincere appreciation for the time, knowledge and insight provided by each of the panelists listed below. Their expertise was critical to DEQ's efforts to determine which projects were most deserving of limited funds DEQ has available to address nonpoint source pollution. In 2026, DEQ received complete applications for a record number of projects (32) with a total request for $2,905,584 in funding. With support from multiple federal and state funding sources, DEQ intends to partially or fully fund 20 projects at a total cost of $1,852,884.

Panel scoring and funding recommendations are used by DEQ to guide funding decisions, but there may be circumstances where DEQ chooses to deviate from the recommendations provided by the Panel in order to address particular funding restraints or support agency priorities. The following reviewer comment summary reflects scoring, funding recommendations and comments from the Agency Review Panel and DEQ staff. Not all comments reflect the opinion of DEQ or the opinion of all members of the Panel. These comments are provided to help shed light on the deliberations and provide insight to help future applicants.

Agency Review Panel Members and Their Affiliations

Member Name	**Affiliation**
Peter Brown	FWP Habitat Fisheries Division
Melissa Downing	DNRC Renewable Resource Grant and Loan Program
Erik Englebert	DEQ Groundwater Permitting Section
Lindsey Glastetter	DNRC Climate Pollution Reduction Grant Program
Brett Heitshusen	Department of Ag, Sustainable Agriculture Program
Austin McCullough	USFWS
Eric Regensberger	DEQ Standards and Modeling Section
Sale Rhodes	DNRC Water Resources Division, Regional Water Planner
Hannah Riedl	DEQ Nonpoint Source and Wetlands Section
Nikki Sandve	DNRC
Cory Wolfe	USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Civil Engineer

Project: Lower Boulder River – Shaw Dam Removal and Riparian Restoration
Applicant: Montana Trout Unlimited
Funding Request: $300,000
Funding to be Offered: $300,000
Panel Score (average): 71
Panel Funding Recommendation: Fully Fund
Reviewer Comments

- Project would reestablish fish passage between the Boulder River watershed and the Jefferson River
- Project would restore 8 CFS of flow to the Boulder River
- Project would create new wetlands
- Project would prevent catastrophic failure and large sediment release from the Shaw dam
- One water right change, critical to implementation, is still making its way through the DNRC approval process
- Project will provide long-term education and outreach benefit as it will occur on publicly accessible land

Additional Rationale for Funding Decision

- Project will have tremendous benefit to the biological integrity of the Boulder River and Jefferson River watersheds
- Project has great partner support
- Applicant will leverage $200k in non-federal match

Project: East Fork Bitterroot Restoration – Lazy J Cross Ranch
Applicant: Bitterroot Water Partnership
Funding Request: $37,959
Funding to be Offered: $37,959
Panel Score (average): 67
Panel Funding Recommendation: Fully Fund
Reviewer Comments

- Project does a good job of relying on natural recruitment of vegetation, where appropriate
- Project design builds on insight gained from previous work at a nearby site
- Developing a solid monitoring and adaptive management plan will be critical to the project's success

Additional Rationale for Funding Decision

- Very cost-effective
- Could be used to evaluate and demonstrate the benefits of passive restoration

Project: Cottonwood Creek Restoration Project Phase I
Applicant: Big Blackfoot Chapter of Trout Unlimited
Funding Request: $98,313
Funding to be Offered: $98,313

Panel Score (average): 62
Panel Funding Recommendation: Fully Fund
Reviewer Comments

- Project would improve in-stream flows
- Project would decrease irrigation infrastructure maintenance burden for landowner by consolidating five diversions into 1 (co-benefit not related to nonpoint source pollution)
- Project would leverage ~$127k in non-federal match
- Project would likely inspire future restoration work

Additional Rationale for Funding Decision

- Applicant has a long history of completing projects on-time and within budget

Project: Upper East Gallatin Floodplain and Wetland Restoration - Implementation
Applicant: Gallatin Watershed Council
Funding Request: $111,780
Funding to be Offered: $125,000
Panel Score (average): 61
Panel Funding Recommendation: Fully Fund
Reviewer Comments

- This is a request for additional funding to complete a previously funded project that ran into budget issues
- Landowner does not rely on the project area for livestock forage and is open to modifying grazing to protect the project
- The project is relatively expensive compared to its potential for reducing nonpoint source pollution and restoring natural processes

Additional Rationale for Funding Decision

- DEQ has already invested a significant amount of resources in pre-project monitoring at the site
- DEQ is able to fund this project with money from an undersubscribed grant, provided that it is funded at $125k or more. DEQ is proposing to reduce the amount of funding previously committed from an older funding source and make up the difference and meet the current request with HAB Grant funding. Previously committed “older” funding will then be used to fund additional nonpoint source pollution prevention work at other locations.

Project: Lake Helena Watershed Watershed Restoration Plan Update
Applicant: Lewis and Clark County
Funding Request: $28,050
Funding to be Offered: $25,000
Panel Score (average): 79
Panel Funding Recommendation: Partial Fund at Greater Than 50% of Funding Request
Reviewer Comments

- Overall, this project is simple, well thought through, achievable, and a great next-step to support future reduction of non-point source pollution work in the area
- Would like to see or hear more evidence of landowner support and promise of engagement as much of the water is along private land

Additional Rationale for Funding Decision

- DEQ has $50k in funding from an EPA 604 grant that can be used to fund Watershed Restoration Plan development. DEQ received two applications that are eligible to use this funding source, so DEQ decided to split the $50k evenly between the two projects.

Project: Lower Shields Watershed Capacity Development
Applicant: Park Conservation District
Funding Request: $30,000
Funding to be Offered: $30,000
Panel Score (average): 78
Panel Funding Recommendation: Partial Fund at Greater Than 50% of Funding Request
Reviewer Comments

- Park Conservation District has strong relationships with long-term residents and ag producers, a key group of people for implementing nonpoint source pollution prevention projects
- Park CD needs funding to support staff time for meeting with landowners and developing projects
- The Park CD application was arguably the best capacity funding application (well-written, clear deliverables, etc) that DEQ received this year. Kudos!

Additional Rationale for Funding Decision

- DEQ appreciates the unique role Park CD can play in working with local ag producers to address nonpoint source pollution and is thrilled to offer funding to support their endeavors

Project: Libby Creek Concept Plan
Applicant: Lincoln Conservation District
Funding Request: $30,000
Funding to be Offered: $22,500
Panel Score (average): 77
Panel Funding Recommendation: Partial Fund at Greater Than 50% of Funding Request
Reviewer Comments

- Project has tremendous landowner support
- Projects involving riprap, infrastructure protection and hard armoring of streambanks are generally not appropriate for nonpoint source funding; funding will need to focus on finding solutions that support natural processes, including channel migration, floodplain attenuation and planting of native riparian vegetation

Additional Rationale for Funding Decision

- In the aftermath of severe flooding elsewhere in the state, the tendency has been for landowners to resort to using riprap and other hardened structural techniques to stop the natural effects of periodic flooding; many have learned from sad experience that fighting natural processes can be extremely expensive, can exacerbate damages in future flooding events, and frequently fails to actually protect what its intended to protect. DEQ would like to be a partner in helping landowners find solutions that work with, rather than against, natural processes.

Project: Upper Yellowstone Watershed – WRP Development Phase I
Applicant: Montana Freshwater Partners
Funding Request: $30,000
Funding to be Offered: $25,000
Panel Score (average): 76
Panel Funding Recommendation: Partial Fund at Greater Than 50% of Funding Request
Reviewer Comments

- Project cost seems high for something that only completes pre-planning for developing a watershed restoration plan
- Lack of a TMDL is part of the reason for the high cost of pre-planning, as a TMDL would typically cover much of the work proposed in this application
- What is the plan for funding completion of a WRP?

Additional Rationale for Funding Decision

- DEQ has $50k in funding from an EPA 604 grant that can be used to fund Watershed Restoration Plan development. DEQ received two applications that are eligible to use this funding source, so DEQ decided to split the $50k evenly between the two projects.

Project: Lower Shields Project Development
Applicant: Montana Freshwater Partners
Funding Request: $30,000
Funding to be Offered: $30,000
Panel Score (average): 76
Panel Funding Recommendation: Partial Fund at Greater Than 50% of Funding Request
Reviewer Comments

- How is Montana Freshwater Partners' role in developing nonpoint source projects different from the roles filled by Trout Unlimited and the Park CD? Why are all three needed?
- Is there a plan for sustaining capacity in the Shields after the DEQ focus watershed designation ends?
- Applicant has been successful so far in identifying and developing nonpoint source projects
- Applicant previously prepared a report on barriers to nonpoint source pollution prevention work in the Shields; how will this capacity funding request help address the identified barriers?

Additional Rationale for Funding Decision

- There is an identified need to sustain capacity for developing projects in support of the DEQ focus watershed effort

Project: Trout Unlimited Shields Watershed Capacity
Applicant: Trout Unlimited
Funding Request: $30,000
Funding to be Offered: $30,000
Panel Score (average): 74
Panel Funding Recommendation: Partial Fund at Greater Than 50% of Funding Request
Reviewer Comments

- How is Trout Unlimited's role in developing nonpoint source projects different from the roles filled by Montana Freshwater Partners and the Park CD? Why are all three needed?
- Is there a plan for sustaining capacity in the Shields after the DEQ focus watershed designation ends?
- Applicant has been successful so far in identifying and developing nonpoint source projects
- Application was somewhat lacking in details regarding specific goals and deliverables

Additional Rationale for Funding Decision

- There is an identified need to sustain capacity for developing projects in support of the DEQ focus watershed effort
- During the Agency Review Panel meeting, the applicant made a compelling case for fully funding all three of the Shields capacity applications

Project: Flathead Watershed Restoration Capacity Building
Applicant: Flathead Lakers
Funding Request: $30,000
Funding to be Offered: $22,500
Panel Score (average): 70
Panel Funding Recommendation: Partial Fund at Greater Than 50% of Funding Request
Reviewer Comments

- Why did activities by the Lakers decline in 2019, what is the impetus now for trying to resurrect these efforts?
- In general, it was difficult for some reviewers to figure out the relationship between the activities proposed in the application and efforts to reduce nonpoint source pollution; this was especially true regarding the proposed on-the-ground activities

Additional Rationale for Funding Decision

- It would be good to see renewed capacity in the Flathead Lake watershed for addressing nonpoint source pollution; in the past, the Flathead Lakers have been a capable partner, and there is plenty of work to be done in that part of the state

Project: Flint Creek Phase III Conn Property Habitat Restoration Project
Applicant: Trout Unlimited
Funding Request: $170,200
Funding to be Offered: $170,200
Panel Score (average): 68
Panel Funding Recommendation: Partial Fund at Greater Than 50% of Funding Request
Reviewer Comments

- The proposed design does not appear to allow for natural channel migration, a process that is typically critical to building and maintaining healthy aquatic systems.
- Page 11 of the application calls for installation of approximately 10,550 willow cuttings, but the Final Construction Cost Estimates call for installation of 32,925 willow cuttings.
- Were design alternatives considered that would address the straightened stretch of stream in the middle of the project area?
- Consider removing the engineered riffles from the design, unless there is a clear purpose and an explanation of how they will be sustained long-term by natural channel forming processes
- Project builds on lessons learned from previous projects on Flint Creek

Additional Rationale for Funding Decision

- DEQ is able to fund this project using an undersubscribed funding source (HAB Grant)

Project: Bitterroot Headwaters Restoration – Cameron Creek – Sula Ranch
Applicant: Bitterroot Water Partnership
Funding Request: $94,774
Funding to be Offered: $71,081
Panel Score (average): 65
Panel Funding Recommendation: Partial Fund at Greater Than 50% of Funding Request
Reviewer Comments

- Project has solid potential for encouraging recolonization by beaver
- A grazing management plan will be essential to project success
- Project is likely to inspire additional, similar work on adjacent land
- Project is potentially scalable, which may prove necessary considering how tight competition is for funding this year

Additional Rationale for Funding Decision

- Applicant did a thorough job of evaluating and addressing site constraints and opportunities.
- Project has a high likelihood of success

Project: Bangtail Creek Restoration Phase II
Applicant: Montana Freshwater Partners
Funding Request: $261,434

Funding to be Offered: $221,099
Panel Score (average): 63
Panel Funding Recommendation: Partial Fund at Greater Than 50% of Funding Request
Reviewer Comments

- Project is potentially scalable, which may prove necessary considering how tight competition is for funding this year
- Project builds upon ongoing efforts to improve water quality in Bangtail Creek and the Shields River

Project: Hyde Ranch Fencing and Riparian Enhancement Phase I
Applicant: Trout Unlimited
Funding Request: $195,544
Funding to be Offered: $195,544
Panel Score (average): 61
Panel Funding Recommendation: Partial Fund at Greater Than 50% of Funding Request
Reviewer Comments

- The maps provided in the application show several stream crossings proposed within the proposed fenced-out area along the Madison River. These do not seem to be related to improving water quality and might not be eligible for nonpoint source funding.
- It's unclear whether the waterbodies in the project area are streams vs ditches. If they are streams, leaving space to clean them out with heavy equipment seems to run counter to the goal of preventing nonpoint source pollution.

Additional Rationale for Funding Decision

- This is one of several projects that DEQ can fund using an undersubscribed funding source (HAB Grant)

Project: Lower Shields River Riparian Restoration - Lawellin
Applicant: Montana Freshwater Partners
Funding Request: $175,765
Funding to be Offered: $131,824
Panel Score (average): 60
Panel Funding Recommendation: Partial Fund at Greater Than 50% of Funding Request
Reviewer Comments

- Within the project area, historic straightening and confinement appear to be preventing natural channel migration processes that would build and maintain natural stream conditions; it's unclear whether the proposed project will address the root causes of habitat loss and water quality impairment
- Maps included with the application show riparian buffers that will be relatively narrow

Additional Rationale for Funding Decision

- Reviewers generally agreed that the project will lead to meaningful improvements in riparian health and water quality.

Project: Polson Bay Golf Course Pollution Prevention Project
Applicant: Flathead Lakers
Funding Request: $73,000
Funding to be Offered: $67,441
Panel Score (average): 59
Panel Funding Recommendation: Partial Fund at Greater Than 50% of Funding Request
Reviewer Comments

- It's unclear whether the golf course is the source of the E. coli getting picked up in sampling along Flathead Lake, and whether the proposed project will reduce E. coli loading in the Lake.
- If the project is funded, a monitoring plan should be established to demonstrate the effectiveness of the project in reducing E. coli and nutrient loading to Flathead Lake
- It's great to see a project with involvement and support from one of the tribes!

Project: Canyon Creek Restoration Phase II
Applicant: Trout Unlimited
Funding Request: $277,530
Funding to be Offered: $208,148
Panel Score (average): 59
Panel Funding Recommendation: Partial Fund at Greater Than 50% of Funding Request
Reviewer Comments

- Given that there is some uncertainty regarding what type of structure will replace the bridge, reviewers felt the project could be scaled to meet partial funding
- If funded, a grazing management plan will be a required deliverable
- Project will prevent a head-cut from moving upstream and causing extensive damage to intact stream reaches

Additional Rationale for Funding Decision

- There are a lot of projects competing for funding this year, and this particular project didn't rank as well with the Agency Review Panel as some others did

Project: Hound Creek Realignment and Floodplain Connection
Applicant: High Plains Conservation District
Funding Request: $95,300
Funding to be Offered: $0
Panel Score (average): 54
Panel Funding Recommendation: Partial Fund at Greater Than 50% of Funding Request

Reviewer Comments

- Given the location of the project (on a tight bend in a highly mobile, migrating stream system), the long-term success of the proposed project seems uncertain
- It would be great to see the applicant come back next year with a more comprehensive project on the same stream that addresses a longer stretch of stream and does more to address the root causes of channel instability (e.g. floodplain and channel migration zone constriction)

Additional Rationale for Funding Decision

- Reviewers agreed with applicant's assertion that this project could not be scaled down if partial funding was provided, and would prefer to see a more comprehensive project at the same site in a future funding cycle

Project: McCartney (Kalsta Ranch) Project
Applicant: Big Hole Watershed Committee
Funding Request: $54,455
Funding to be Offered: $0
Panel Score (average): 51
Panel Funding Recommendation: Partial Fund at Greater Than 50% of Funding Request
Reviewer Comments

- It was great to hear directly from the landowner at the Agency Review Panel meeting; panelists were impressed with all the efforts you have made to improve rangeland health, work with partners and be a wise steward of your lands; thank you for coming and sharing your experience with us!
- It's unclear whether the project would be addressing natural or human-caused sources of sediment loading; natural sources of sediment loading are not considered nonpoint source pollution
- The purpose of the nonpoint source project funding program is to reduce and prevent nonpoint source pollution by restoring and protecting natural processes and conditions. It's unclear how the proposed activities would "restore and protect natural processes and conditions".

Project: Gallatin Stream Teams
Applicant: Gallatin Watershed Council
Funding Request: $27,575
Funding to be Offered: $0
Panel Score (average): 69
Panel Funding Recommendation: Partial Fund at Plus or Minus 50% of Funding Request
Reviewer Comments

- Historically, this work was lead by the Gallatin Local Water Quality District
- Concern expressed over the effectiveness of the monitoring as a tool for supporting/encouraging public engagement in nonpoint source pollution prevention projects

Additional Rationale for Funding Decision

- EPA's 319 grant funding requirements limit the extent to which funds can be used to support long-term monitoring efforts; this particular project falls into somewhat of a gray area with respect to EPA's guidelines

Project: Grave Creek Rehabilitation Project Phase I
Applicant: Lincoln Conservation District
Funding Request: $149,880
Funding to be Offered: $0
Panel Score (average): 55
Panel Funding Recommendation: Partial Fund at Plus or Minus 50% of Funding Request
Reviewer Comments

- The primary purpose of this project is to protect infrastructure (a septic system) by artificially inhibiting natural channel forming processes using techniques (Rosgen style deflection vanes) that have been shown in the past to have a high rate of failure.

Additional Rationale for Funding Decision

- Project does not address the root cause of channel instability (loss of a braided channel form)

Project: Growth and Development NPS Reduction in Gallatin Valley
Applicant: Gallatin Watershed Council
Funding Request: $11,737
Funding to be Offered: $11,737
Panel Score (average): 71
Panel Funding Recommendation: Partial Fund at Less Than 50% of Funding Request
Reviewer Comments

- One reviewer expressed concern over the use of self-evaluation tools to evaluate success
- Reviewers would have liked to have seen additional details regarding the proposed activities

Additional Rationale for Funding Decision

- This project received a "partial fund minus" recommendation from the Agency Review Panel. However, DEQ feels that it represents a unique approach to encouraging water-quality-conscious decision making, that could, if successful, be applied in other watersheds around the state.

Project: West Fork Madison Side Channel and Floodplain Restoration
Applicant: Trout Unlimited
Funding Request: $136,204
Funding to be Offered: $0
Panel Score (average): 61

Panel Funding Recommendation: Partial Fund at Less Than 50% of Funding Request
Reviewer Comments

- DEQ and the Panel expressed concerns over whether similar water quality objectives could be accomplished by using less costly design alternatives or by fencing humans and livestock out of the project site and allowing natural processes to reclaim the affected area.
- Based on the site photos, it looks like livestock pressure may be having a significant impact on riparian vegetation; will livestock be fenced out of the restored area?
- Is some of the instability coming from impacts upstream?

Additional Rationale for Funding Decision

- Reviewers felt a fair bit of uncertainty over whether the proposed design was the best approach for the site

Project: Montana Beaver Conflict Resolution Program
Applicant: National Wildlife Federation
Funding Request: $92,456
Funding to be Offered: $0
Panel Score (average): 57
Panel Funding Recommendation: Partial Fund at Less Than 50% of Funding Request
Reviewer Comments

- Application did not contain a clear methodology for quantifying impacts to nonpoint source pollution

Project: Shields Loop Campground Fencing and Riparian Planting
Applicant: Trout Unlimited
Funding Request: $51,560
Funding to be Offered: $0
Panel Score (average): 57
Panel Funding Recommendation: Partial Fund at Less Than 50% of Funding Request
Reviewer Comments

- Significant cost savings may be achievable by replacing potted plants with willow and cottonwood cuttings
- There needs to be a plan for controlling human impacts on the revegetated wetlands
- Given the public visibility of the project, interpretive signage at the site could be a valuable education and outreach tool
- Reviewers questioned whether the fencing was necessary to reduce nonpoint source pollution, or if its primary function was to keep cattle away from the campsites

Project: Burma Road Sediment Capture Project

Applicant: Big Hole Watershed Committee
Funding Request: $55,665.50
Funding to be Offered: $0
Panel Score (average): 51
Panel Funding Recommendation: Partial Fund at Less Than 50% of Funding Request
Reviewer Comments

- It's unclear whether the project would be addressing natural or human-caused sources of sediment loading; natural sources of sediment loading are not considered nonpoint source pollution
- The purpose of the nonpoint source project funding program is to reduce and prevent nonpoint source pollution by restoring and protecting natural processes and conditions. It's unclear how the proposed activities would "restore and protect natural processes and conditions".
- Project appears to have a large infrastructure protection component (protection of the Burma Road); infrastructure protection is not an eligible use of nonpoint source funding

Project: Lower Grant Creek Phase II
Applicant: Clark Fork Coalition
Funding Request: $145,000
Funding to be Offered: $0
Panel Score (average): 48
Panel Funding Recommendation: Partial Fund at Less Than 50% of Funding Request
Reviewer Comments

- DEQ's minimum design standards require that beaver be allowed to freely coexist; there is some indication in the designs that this standard might not be followed
- The proposed design calls for a tightly meandering stream channel that would likely not be present naturally in an oxbow-dominated, frequently disturbed system. This concern was raised in a previous phase of the project but was not addressed in this phase.
- A considerable amount of permitting work remains to be completed before implementation can begin; it's unclear what effect this might have on both the cost of the project and the proposed timeline

Additional Rationale for Funding Decision

- This project received the second-to-lowest score from the Agency Review Panel

Project: Shields River Streambank Restoration Design - Johnstone
Applicant: Montana Freshwater Partners
Funding Request: $61,400
Funding to be Offered: $30,000
Panel Score (average): 46
Panel Funding Recommendation: Partial Fund at Less Than 50% of Funding Request

Reviewer Comments

- There seems to be a strong infrastructure (hayfield) protection component to this project; infrastructure protection is not eligible for nonpoint source funding
- Project does not appear to address some of the root causes of pollution (instability due to channel manipulation/constriction).
- Proposed restoration techniques would arrest natural channel migration processes rather than return them to natural rates
- At the Review Panel meeting, applicant indicated that there is significant room for new ideas to be incorporated.
- The project would have significant benefits in engaging a long-term landowner and member of the ag community who could be influential in bringing more members of the ag community to the table to consider restoration projects on their land.

Additional Rationale for Funding Decision

- DEQ recognizes the potential opportunity for supporting design alternatives that would work with natural processes
- DEQ plans to offer $30k to support development of a preliminary engineering report or similar alternatives analysis

Project: Building Capacity for the Sun River Watershed Group
Applicant: Sun River Watershed Group
Funding Request: $30,000
Funding to be Offered: $0
Panel Score (average): 65
Panel Funding Recommendation: Not Fund
Reviewer Comments

- Panelists expressed significant concern over the project's connection to activities that would have relatively minimal impact on nonpoint source pollution (e.g., installing rain barrels within the boundaries of an MS4 and updating a watershed restoration plan that was previously updated less than 5 years ago).

Project: Exclusion Fence on Unnamed Tributary to the Gallatin River
Applicant: National Wildlife Federation
Funding Request: $4,251.50
Funding to be Offered: $0
Panel Score (average): 55
Panel Funding Recommendation: Not Fund
Reviewer Comments

- Panelists liked the idea of using the on-the-ground project as a tool for training MDT staff, but generally felt that this project could be accomplished using other resources

Additional Rationale for Funding Decision

- DEQ recommends that the applicant apply for an education and outreach mini-grant to fund the training with MDT

Project: Pattee Creek Riparian Revegetation Project
Applicant: City of Missoula
Funding Request: $15,751
Funding to be Offered: $0
Panel Score (average): 51
Panel Funding Recommendation: Not Fund
Reviewer Comments

- It's unclear how the proposed monitoring techniques, designed for wild streams, would be applied to the urban setting
- DEQ's minimum design criteria call for riparian buffers to be at least 35 feet wide; most of the proposed project area would likely not be able to meet this standard
- Project has a stated purpose of reducing pollutant loading from a permitted point source discharge outfall, and nonpoint source funding cannot be used to address point source discharges.

Additional Rationale for Funding Decision

- Project was one of the lowest scoring applications, and received a "not fund" recommendation from the Agency Review Panel.