



2026 On-the-Ground Project Application Form

General Information

Project Name _____

Applicant Name _____

Is your organization registered with the Montana Secretary of State?

Explanation: Each applicant 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/>

Is your organization registered with the federal System for Award Management (SAM)?

Explanation: Each applicant is required to register with SAM. To register or check your organization's status, go to <https://sam.gov/content/home>. If you get an "Unsupported Browser" error, copy, and paste the link into a Google Chrome browser window.

<u>Primary Contact</u> _____	<u>Title</u> _____
<u>Address</u> _____	<u>City</u> _____ <u>State</u> _____ <u>Zip Code</u> _____
<u>Phone Number</u> _____	<u>Email</u> _____
<u>Signature</u> _____	

Explanation: This is the person who DEQ would routinely contact to discuss project progress, billing, etc.

<u>Signatory</u> _____	<u>Title</u> _____
<u>Address</u> _____	<u>City</u> _____ <u>State</u> _____ <u>Zip Code</u> _____
<u>Phone Number</u> _____	<u>Email</u> _____
<u>Signature</u> _____	

Explanation: This is the person who can legally sign contracts and other binding documents on behalf of the applicant (e.g., a board chair)

Note: The primary contact, signatory and landowner must sign the application. Signatures must be either signed electronically, or wet-signed, scanned and sent electronically.

Landowner Name _____

Landowner Signature _____

Landowner Name _____

Landowner Signature _____

Landowner Name _____

Landowner Signature _____

Explanation: Landowner signatures are required. Signing the application does not obligate the landowner to implement a project. Instead, it is an indication that the landowner has read the application and agrees, in principle, with the project concept and goals.

Your organization's Unique Entity Identifier number (UEI #)

Explanation: Each applicant is required to have a current UEI number. The UEI number replaces the old DUNS number. If your organization had a DUNS number, you should have received a notification from the federal government indicating that your DUNS number has been changed to a UEI number. If you did not receive this notification, or if you never had a DUNS number, you will need to go to the federal government's System for Award Management (SAM - <https://sam.gov/content/home>) to obtain your UEI number. DEQ recommends starting this process early as it is very time-consuming, requires providing documentation-sometimes with follow-up requests for additional information, and can take up to 2 months to complete. If you need assistance, you may contact the federal help desk at 866-606-8220 Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m. through 8:00 p.m. EST.

Does your organization have adequate liability insurance for the risks associated with your project?

Explanation: Each applicant must have or obtain liability insurance coverage meeting the requirements stated in the Draft Sample Contract and/or requirements negotiated based on the appropriate level of risk associated with the project.

Describe the technical and administrative skills your organization will use to effectively and efficiently complete your proposed project(s).

Budget Form

Please fill out the On-the-Ground Project Budget Template (Excel file). Cells highlighted in yellow may be edited to fit the needs of your particular project. DEQ uses a template to construct nonpoint source grant contracts. The Budget Template contains tasks and typical deliverables that match up with the grant contract template. Please see the Example Contract and Scope of Work Template for a more detailed look at typical task requirements and deliverables.

Project Form

A separate Project Form (including providing separate attachments) must be submitted for each project included in your application. y lump and when to split projects.

Splitting Examples (fill out multiple Project Forms)

- Stream restoration work occurring on two separate streams..
- Two projects with significantly different sets of project partners.
- Two projects that address substantially different pollution sources (e.g., one project move a corral off of a streambank, and another removes mine tailings, with both projects being on the same property).

Lumping Examples

- Contiguous stream restoration work spanning multiple land parcels.
- Three projects that address similar sources of pollution on a single land parcel (e.g., moving a corral off a stream, implementing a grazing management plan, and relocating a manure storage facility out of the floodplain, all on the same ranch)

Project Form

A separate Project Form (including providing separate attachments) must be submitted for each project included in your application

Project Name:

Required Attachments in Addition to This Form

Letter of support from the organization that created or sponsored the creation of the DEQ-accepted Watershed Restoration Plan or the Tribe that created the EPA-approved Tribal Nonpoint Source Management Plan (if applicable).

Letter of support from EACH landowner associated with the proposed project area (if applicable).

Budget Table (see Microsoft Excel Template).

Detailed Project site map(s) Attach a map or set of maps showing the location and size of proposed activity if a site has been predetermined. The map scale must be between 1:1,000 and 1:12,500. The map(s) must have an aerial photo background (e.g., USDA NAIP photography, Google Earth imagery, etc.). The map(s) must show the latitude, longitude, site name, and landowner for the activity site. The map(s) should also identify waterbodies affected by the pollution that the activity is designed to address. *(This is in addition to adding points of the project location to the website on page 4).*

Optional Attachments

Attach additional items and information that could help reviewers better understand your project. Information could describe public health risks, opportunities to leverage other funding sources, etc. However, application reviewers may have limited time available, and excessively long, optional attachments might not get reviewed. Do not attach copies of TMDL documents, TMDL implementation evaluations, Watershed Restoration Plans, Tribal Nonpoint Source Plans, or large comprehensive studies. The following attachments may be included. Please no more than 20 pages.

Project Design Plans/Drawings

Preliminary Engineering Reports / Site Evaluations

Landowner Agreements / Construction Permits / Floodplain Permits

Site photos

Additional Letters of Support

Other: _____

Other: _____

Other: _____

Project Area

Please provide as detailed a description of the project area as possible.

List the counties in which the project will be located.

List the 12-digit Hydrologic Unit Codes (HUCs), sometimes referred to as Sixth Code HUCs, in which the project will take place. Use the following link to help assist you in determining the HUCs: <https://apps.nationalmap.gov/viewer/>

Project Location Map

In addition to providing your own project site map, please go to the following website and follow the instructions to add your project location to the map.

<https://gis.mtdeq.us/portal/apps/storymaps/stories/42f4a668285c4ef6aa94b1623f10df57>

Connection to a Previous or Ongoing Project

Is this project tied to a previous or ongoing project? If so, please describe the connection.

Project Purpose

Select the watershed restoration plan or tribal nonpoint source plan that your project will help implement (please type in if missing from list) (Not required for HAB reduction projects)

Letter of support from author, or if the author was contracted, the author sponsor, attached? (If no, explain why below.)

IMPAIRMENT LISTINGS: Projects that address water quality impairments on Montana's 2020 List of Impaired Waters are preferred though not a requirement. Funding may be used for projects that protect waterbodies that are demonstrated to be healthy.

Waterbody name from the 2020 List of Impaired Waters

Probable causes of impairment to be addressed

Waterbody name from the 2020 List of Impaired Waters

Probable causes of impairment to be addressed

HEALTHY WATERSHEDS: While project funding is prioritized to addressing known impairments, funding can be used to protect healthy waters from becoming impaired.

Name of healthy waterbody to be protected

Description of identified threat

Name of healthy waterbody to be protected

Description of identified threat

Project Partners

Identify each of the project partners and describe their contribution to the project. Include landowners, land managers, project designers, funders, and your own organization. Indicate whether each partner, other than your organization, has provided a letter of support. (Note: each landowner must provide a letter of support if project site(s) have been predetermined.)

Landowner	Contributions to Project	Letter of Support Attached?
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Project Partner	Contributions to Project	Letter of Support Attached?
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Project Coordination and Planning Task

This task would include completion of all applicable planning tasks from the list below, as well as coordination and oversight of the efforts of all project partners.

Identify the status of the following project planning tasks, where applicable.

	Completed?	Copy Attached?	To Be Completed Pre-Contract (Oct 2026)?	To Be Completed as Contract Deliverable?
*Draft Project Designs				
*Final Project Designs				
Consultation With Potential Regulators				
Necessary Permits				
Cultural Resources Inventory (<i>if relevant</i>)				
Other:				
Other:				
Other:				

***See Call for Applications Section 5.1 for minimum design standards.*

Describe any additional project planning that *will have been completed prior to execution of a contract (October 2026)*.

Describe any additional project planning and coordination that will need to be completed after the execution of a contract (October 2026).

Landowner Agreement Task

DEQ includes the following language in every nonpoint source contract involving on-the-ground activities:

Contractor shall submit signed landowner agreement(s) verifying that Contractor and DEQ staff may access the project site, at reasonable times and with prior notification, for the purposes of project planning, implementation, and post-implementation monitoring. The agreement(s) must ensure appropriate operation and maintenance of all structures, vegetation, and management measures for the life of the project (typically 10 years). If grazing will be allowed within the project area, the agreement(s) must include a sustainable management plan for livestock grazing, designed to protect and enhance riparian function. If a signed landowner agreement does not meet the above-stated minimum requirements, Contractor shall negotiate an amended agreement with the landowner that ensures appropriate operation and maintenance of all structures, vegetation, management measures, and includes a sustainable management plan for any livestock grazing for the life of the project (typically 10 years).

Identify the status of the following landowner agreement tasks, where applicable.

	Completed?	Copy Attached?	To Be Completed Pre-Contract (Oct 2026)?	To Be Completed as Contract Deliverable?
Draft Landowner Agreement(s)				
Final Landowner Agreement(s)				
Grazing Management Plan				
Other:				
Other:				

Project Effectiveness Monitoring Task

If you will be conducting any on-the-ground implementation work, you will be required to complete the monitoring activities described in the task language below, as applicable. Describe below how you plan to determine the effectiveness of your project. Project effectiveness success criteria should be time-bound and assess each project objective quantitatively. Success criteria should clearly define adaptive management thresholds. Examples may include: a minimum 25% decrease in sediment/nitrogen/phosphorus load within 2 years; a 70% survival rate of containerized plantings after one year.

If you are applying for nonpoint source grant funding for project design only, and not for project implementation, you may either skip this task, or describe below which parts of this task you intend to complete:

Example Task Language

Contractor shall, in consultation with the DEQ Project Manager, develop a reasonable method or set of methods for evaluating and reporting on the effectiveness of the project in addressing water quality issues. Contractor shall complete a monitoring plan to guide monitoring activities. Contractor shall complete the following monitoring activities:

- *Estimate the sediment load reductions (tons/year) achieved through implementation of the proposed restoration activities and management practices.*
- *Estimate the nitrogen load reductions (pounds/year) achieved through implementation of the proposed restoration activities and management practices.*
- *Estimate the phosphorus load reductions (pounds/year) achieved through implementation of the proposed restoration activities and management practices.*
- *For projects designed to address pollution from pollutants other than nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment, evaluate and report on the effectiveness of the project in addressing water quality issues.*
- *Contractor shall collect data, as directed by the DEQ Project Manager, to be used in estimating sediment, nitrogen, and phosphorus load reductions (and for harmful algal bloom reduction projects, carbon sequestration/emissions reductions) achieved through implementation of restoration activities and management practices designed to address these pollutants.*
- *Use the following measures to evaluate the sustainability of restoration activities and management practices:*
 - *[Vegetation mortality rate.]*
 - *Pre- and post-construction photo point monitoring consistent with the “Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board Guide to Photo Monitoring” methodologies, or a similar published photo point monitoring method accepted by DEQ. The U.S. Forest Service provides additional photo point monitoring guidance in the “United States Forest Service Photo Point Monitoring Handbook”.*
 - *[Riparian survey.]*
 - *[Other.]*

Please describe any additional monitoring you intend to do as part of the project.

Project Implementation Task

Provide a **detailed description of the solution you are proposing** to implement to address a nonpoint source pollution problem.

- Describe the practices you intend to design and/or implement to solve the problem (what, where, when, how much or how many).
- Describe the anticipated maintenance needs (what, where, who, how long).
- Refer to the minimum design standards in the Call for Applications.
 - *Please fill out this section to the best of your ability, even if you are only seeking funding for project design.*

Education, Outreach and Training Task

To get good projects on the ground, trained staff and board members and educated, enthusiastic landowners are required. To promote the development of future projects, DEQ encourages project sponsors to use up to \$5,000 per project of funding to support training and conduct education and outreach. Example training topics might include: project management, public procurement, technical writing, GIS, water quality monitoring, web design, public speaking, human resource management, photo journalism, UAV (drone) piloting, financial management, and restoration techniques. Education and outreach activities might include targeted landowner outreach, conducting project site tours for local landowners, tabling at community events, holding a watershed festival, providing stipends and travel reimbursements for speakers and participants to attend a nonpoint source pollution prevention workshop, or generating articles for social media. The primary requirement for training and outreach is clearly explaining how the activity generates behavior change to address nonpoint source pollution. Funding may not be used to pay for food and beverages, or for honorariums and gifts.

Describe the education and outreach activities or training you will complete to promote behaviors or facilitate future efforts to reduce nonpoint source pollution. Additionally, identify the goals of the training/education and outreach activities.

Identify the specific target audience and method of delivery. Additionally, describe how the proposed training and/or education and outreach will increase local capacity and interest for addressing/promoting behavior change to reduce nonpoint source pollution.

Describe how you will evaluate the effectiveness of the proposed activities.

Project Administration Task

Please use the task description below as a guide when calculating your budget for project administration. DEQ typically includes these requirements in every nonpoint source grant contract, with only minor variation. Funding applied to the Project Administration Task on each project must not exceed 10% of the total amount of funding requested, or \$12,000, whichever is lower.

Example Task Language

Contractor shall oversee and be accountable for the completion of all tasks. Contractor shall maintain regular contact with the DEQ project manager. Contractor shall prepare and submit Status Reports, Final Reports and Attachment B Billing Statements according to the format and schedule described below.

Report Format

- *Contractor shall submit each Attachment B Billing Statement, Status Report and Final Report using the most current reporting guidance and templates provided by the DEQ project manager.*
- *Contractor shall ensure each Status Report and Final Report contains adequate documentation to justify accompanying reimbursement requests and match reporting, to the satisfaction of the DEQ project manager.*
- *Contractor shall ensure that the Final Report is a standalone document describing all contract activities and containing copies of all contract deliverables (even if the deliverables were previously submitted).*

Reporting Schedule

- *Status Reports: Due June 15th and December 15th of each year the Contract is in effect, and each time an Attachment B Billing Statement is submitted.*
- *Draft Final Report: Contractor shall submit a complete draft Final Report for DEQ review and comment at least 15 days prior to the contract expiration date.*
- *Final Report: Contractor shall submit a Final Report, addressing DEQ comments on the draft Final Report, on or before the Contract expiration date.*
- *Attachment B Billing Statements: Contractor shall submit an Attachment B Billing Statement with each Status Report, or Final Report submitted to DEQ while the Contract is in effect. To maintain cash flow, Contractor may submit interim Attachment B Billing Statements as frequently as monthly during the term of the Contract. However, each interim Attachment B Billing Statement must be accompanied by an Interim Report.*

Project Timeline

4Q	1Q	2Q	3Q	4Q	1Q	2Q	3Q	4Q	1Q	2Q	3Q
2026	2027	2027	2027	2027	2028	2028	2028	2028	2029	2029	2029

Project Coordination and Planning Task

Landowner Agreement Task

Project Effectiveness Monitoring Task

Project Implementation Task

Education, Outreach and Training Task

Project Administration Task

Co-Benefit Considerations

DEQ is committed to carrying out nonpoint source pollution reduction projects within engaged communities where the impact stretches beyond improving water quality. DEQ will award additional points in the scoring form where co-benefits extend beyond the project. Below are a few examples of how projects might exemplify co-benefits.

- Project will reduce economic hardship such as from livestock mortalities, cost and energy needs to treat municipal drinking and wastewater treatment, or loss of income from recreation
- Project will benefit underserved markets
- Project will improve or create equitable access to a clean and healthy environment
- Project planning included consultation with Tribal Nations
- Project will improve flood and drought resilience of the landscape
- Project impacts will benefit a downstream community and other natural systems (e.g., drinking water sources, human health, wildlife habitat, etc)

Please use this section to highlight co-benefits your project may have.