



2026 Nonpoint Source Pollution Reduction Application - Capacity Building/Education Outreach Projects

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.

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.

Primary Contact Title

Address City State Zip Code

Phone Number Email

Signature ASHLEY LOWREY (Affiliate)
2026.02.17 14:45:41 -07'00'

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

Signatory Title

Address City State Zip Code

Phone Number Email

Signature

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 and the signatory must both sign the application. Signatures must be either signed electronically, or wet-signed, scanned and emailed.

Project Form

Project Type

Is this a Capacity Building Project, or is it an Education and Outreach Project?

Capacity Building Project

Explanation: DEQ supports education and outreach efforts that focus on changes in behavior that will prevent or reduce nonpoint source pollution. Our goal is to encourage adoption of Community Based Social Marketing concepts to produce measurable, sustainable change. We also want to support activities that improve local capacity to develop and implement on-the-ground projects to prevent or reduce nonpoint source pollution. In so doing, we are making a distinction between capacity building projects, and education and outreach projects. The selection you make above will be used to determine which questions on the Scoring Sheet reviewers will use to evaluate your project.

Required Attachments in Addition to This Form

- Letter of support or from each organization critical to the project *(if applicable)*
- Letter of support from each landowner associated with any on-the-ground component of the project *(if applicable)*
- Budget Table (see Microsoft Excel Template)

Activity Location

List the watershed(s) where your proposed work will happen.

Lower Shields

Activity Description

Describe your project goals, proposed activities and how the project will make progress towards addressing nonpoint source pollution. Explain why the proposed work is an appropriate next step towards preventing or reducing nonpoint source pollution.

The Shields Valley Watershed Group (SVWG) has been a community based landowner group that has been active in the Shields Watershed for almost thirty years. This group has been organized and driven by staff under the Park Conservation District (PCD) and has a long history of working directly with, supporting and building trust with local ranchers and producers in the Shields Valley. Now with the 319 funding we are requesting Capacity funding to build growth within our organization so that we can focus staff time on developing NPS project opportunities with local producers. Supporting local ranchers is a priority and a hole with current project planning efforts, and the Park Conservation District and the Shields Valley Watershed Group are best suited and poised to bridge this gap and bring this opportunity to this critical yet underserved stakeholder group. By increasing our capacity to organize more frequent meetings and cultivating focused discussions with landowners and land managers to develop future projects that could be eligible for NPS funding, we will help accelerate the development of projects that address key watershed impairments such as instream and riparian habitat degradation and sediment loading. Our project goals include: 1) Identify NPS projects with trusted landowners (by request) to be implemented through the CD team, 2) Support project partners, TU and MFP, in completing necessary steps to implementing projects, 3) Connect with landowners on broader goals, needs and areas of support, and co-benefits for NPS reduction projects, 4) Provide a trusted meeting space for discussions and broader planning, 5) Collaborative strategic project planning, 6) Provide letters of support and insight on project implementation (Park CD Board), 7) Host educational workshops and symposia on production agriculture and its role in reducing NPS pollution, 8) Host SVWG meetings with educational components to support water science professional and producers finding common ground on stream management. Proposed activities include: 1) Host 3 SVWG meetings, 2) Host five 1:1 conversations to identify projects, 3) Conduct 3 site visits to potential project locations, 4) Host field day or workshop for education on the intersection of riparian management and agricultural production, and 5) Provide ongoing practical technical assistance for partner projects.

Budget Form

Please fill out the Capacity Building and/or Education Outreach 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.

Capacity Building Projects

(only complete this page if you selected "Capacity Building Project" on the top of page 2; otherwise, leave this page blank)

Need and Opportunity

Describe your organization's need for increased capacity, and how the proposed project activities will help you meet those needs. Describe the local interest and opportunities for using the capacity you create to prevent or reduce nonpoint source pollution.

The PCD and SVWG need funding for increased staff time to identify and implement projects in the focus watershed. We currently do not have the capacity to pull staff time from our other priority projects such as drought planning, to focus on 319 project development. The SVWG has a long history of working directly with, supporting and building trust with local ranchers and producers in the Shields Valley. The 319 Capacity funding we are requesting is critical in order for us to build growth within our organization so that we can focus staff time on developing NPS project opportunities with local producers. Supporting local ranchers is a priority and a gap with current 319 project planning efforts, and the PCD and the SVWG are best suited and poised to bridge this gap and bring this opportunity to this critical, yet underserved stakeholder group. We are often approached by landowners for solutions on projects or funding opportunities, with this 319 funding we will be able to propose solutions that incorporate reducing NPS pollution and suggest 319 as a funding solution through the PCD.

In addition, by providing production management education, we can inform partner project managers on how to incorporate follow up implementation to increase project success and address NPS. Examples include, ensuring project plans have weed management plans for disturbed project areas and educating partners on approaches to alter grazing management to reduce pressure on riparian and low lands. We will connect project partners with subject matter expertise to complete grazing and weed management plans to be incorporated into stream restoration design.

The Shields Valley Watershed Group (SVWG) is a trusted partner because it is rancher-led and rancher-attended, providing a credible and locally grounded forum for engagement with agricultural producers. By expanding our organizational structure to formally include SVWG in project implementation, we will increase success in building trust and participation in NPS projects funded through the MT DEQ. This partnership will also expand the number of producers who have access to available funding by leveraging SVWG's network and collaborating partner organizations, thereby broadening participation and impact across the watershed.

Measurement and Sustainability

Describe how you will measure an increase in capacity and how you would sustain this in to the future

The success of this capacity-building effort will be measured through metrics that track sustained and increased landowner, producer and partner engagement and capacity building to support the growth of our organization.

Tracking metrics will include:

- Frequency of technical assistance provided to project partners through educational events.
- The number of landowners engaged through public meetings, workshops, and site visits.
- Meeting frequency and follow up with interested landowners in order to maintain and sustain trust and continue to build on important relationships with landowners that are interested in reducing NPS pollution.
- Identify and prioritize project opportunities through communication and collaboration with partners and landowners.

To sustain this capacity building effort, Park CD will utilize the momentum generated through this grant to secure funding for project implementation.

Timeline

Describe your anticipated project timeline

This effort will be ongoing over 24 months. Timeline includes:

- Receive funding Oct 2026
- October 2026 to Feb 2028 have 3 SVWG meetings.
- October 2026 to December 2027 5 producer meetings for project identification.
- April 2027 to Oct 2027 we will hold 3 producer site visits to develop projects.
- October 2027 to February 2028 we will attend partner meetings to identify roles and objectives for project implementation.
- October 2027 to March 2028 we will hold an educational event.
- December 2027 to April 2028 will work on applying for DEQ 319 project funds.

Education and Outreach Projects

(only complete this page if you selected "Education and Outreach Project" on the top of page 2; otherwise, leave this page blank)

Behavioral Change

Identify the behavior change you are targeting and the target audience. From a nonpoint source pollution perspective, why is the change in behavior important and what impact would it have?

Barriers

What are the existing barriers to changing the behavior? How will your proposed activities address the identified barriers and lead to behavior change?

Evaluation

How will you measure the extent of the behavioral change achieved because of your project?

Timeline

Describe your anticipated timeline

Project Partners and Roles

Identify the partners that will be working on the project, and their roles.

Project partners include:

- Park Conservation District (PCD): will provide project administration, oversight and management.
- Shields Valley Watershed Group (SVWG): project planning, implementation and management.
- Upper Yellowstone Watershed Group (UYWG): provide capacity and support for outreach and communications.
- Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks (MT FWP): technical support and guidance.
- Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC): Technical support and guidance.
- Park County: Local project partner
- Local landowners, ranchers and producers: collaborative project partner.
- Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS): Project partner and supporter.
- Montana Freshwater Partners (MFP): Project collaborator
- Trout Unlimited (TU): Project collaborator
- Montana State University Extension: Project collaborator
- Farm Services Agency: Project and landowner support
- Montana Association of Conservation Districts: General support

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.

There are several important and lasting co-benefits of our Capacity request.

Currently, the Upper Yellowstone Watershed Group, also operating under the Park Conservation District in concert with the Shields Watershed Group, is leading a local drought planning process in the Upper Yellowstone Watershed. This effort is collaboratively addressing drought by educating, organizing and empowering local community members; identifying and implementing drought adaptation projects to enhance watershed resilience; and developing a communications plan to help inform and unite the community around drought. As we work to share our results and plan with the Shields Watershed Group and larger Shields community we will also be exploring the options of pursuing similar drought planning efforts in the Shields Watershed. As we work to increase our capacity to launch NPS projects in the Shields we will simultaneously be focused on identifying projects that work to mitigate drought impacts in the watershed as well as directly address NPS impacts in the watershed.

Ranchers and producers in the Western United States, including the Shields, are increasingly recognized as an underserved market due to a combination of high operational costs, geographic isolation, environmental stressors (drought, wildfire), and limited access to traditional financial services. Our primary focus is to bring more support and opportunities to this important underserved sector.

Project Administration

Each contract will have a Project Administration Task. Take the requirements (listed below) into consideration when planning logistics and budget for your project. Project administration includes bookkeeping, invoicing, interim/annual/final report preparation, office supplies, rent, communications, etc. Nonpoint source funding applied to this task on each project must not exceed 10% of the total amount of funding requested, or \$3,000, whichever is lower. Like all other tasks, payment is by reimbursement for actual expenses incurred.

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.*
- *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.*

Additional Information

Use the space below to include anything additional for the review panel to consider. Attach additional items and information that could help reviewers better understand your project. Please be conscious of reviewers' time, as they may not have time to read lengthy studies and reports. Please do not attach copies of TMDL documents or watershed restoration plans. Please no more than 20 pages.

Although we are applying for Capacity rather than Educational and Outreach dollars, we would still like to continue to host educational workshops for community members associated with implementing projects under this grant. For example, this past month we co-hosted with Trout Unlimited a Grazing Interactions in Riparian Systems workshop. The workshop brought together state, federal and local nonprofit project managers to learn about range management, cattle, nutrition, grazing and herding strategies and behavior. The conservation district and watershed group planned and implemented the panel, as well as facilitated and coordinated the keynote speakers. As a trusted local entity, we have access to the local ranching community. This opportunity was unique because it provided a rare opportunity for managers to hear directly from long-time ranchers on how to best implement projects that serve the needs of the landowner, lessee and grazer while also covering challenging topics such as the importance of building trust with working landowners. The hope from these type of workshops is to both educate project managers on how to be successful working and collaborating with land owners and how to also continue to support agricultural production in order to preserve open and working private lands on the landscape. This workshop was a successful pilot exercise that we hope to build on and grow under this grant by offering additional similar educational events.

BUDGET

2026 Nonpoint Source Pollution Reduction Application - Capacity Building, Education & Outreach Budget Template

Instructions	Project Title	Tasks and Potential Deliverables	Funding Request*	Non-Federal Match**	Other Funding***	Match Source	Match Secured? (Y/N)	Total Project Cost	Additional Information****
This task may include the initial stages of, for example, developing the Plan, demonstration project, outreach program, educational materials or planning project tours. Please include anticipated deliverables and a detailed budget.	Project and Program Development	Site visits (three)	\$ 2,700.00	\$ 1,250.00		PCD	Y	\$ 3,950.00	3 site visits at 20 hours each (scheduling and site visit preparation included) at \$45/hr. PCD will provide \$1250 in match for staff time for site visits.
		Organize and host three Shields Valley Watershed meetings	\$ 2,250.00	\$ 2,250.00		PCD	Y	\$ 4,500.00	30 hours (3 meetings plus planning time), at \$45.00/hr. PCD will provide \$2250 for staff time. 18 hours each (meeting time plus preparation included) + 5 meetings, at \$45.00/hr. \$2000 in kind match from SVWG chairs and landowners donated time to assist with communications and meeting time.
		Facilitate five one-on-one meetings	\$ 4,050.00	\$ 2,000.00		In kind	N	\$ 6,050.00	
		Host workshop on riparian management and agriculture production	\$ 3,600.00	\$ 1,000.00		Private donations	Y	\$ 4,600.00	80 hours for planning, scheduling, event execution and follow ups, at \$45.00/hr
		Facilitate and support partner organization project implementation and letter of support	\$ 3,600.00	\$ 2,500.00		In kind	N	\$ 6,100.00	80 hours at \$45.00/hr. \$2500 in kind match from SVWG chairs and PCD Board volunteer time.
		Attend partner meetings, identify roles and objectives for project implementation	\$ 3,800.00	\$ 2,000.00		PCD	Y	\$ 5,800.00	40 hours at \$45.00/hr. \$2000 PCD match for staff time to attend partner meetings.
		Total	\$ 18,000.00	\$ 11,000.00	\$			\$ 29,000.00	
This task would include, for example, the time getting stakeholder involvement and writing the Plan, leading the project tours or outreach program, and coordinating volunteers. Please include anticipated deliverables and a detailed budget.	Implementation	DED 319 project planning and grant writing	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 1,000.00		PCD	Y	\$ 10,000.00	Assumes time for grant application coordination, design quotes, land owner follow up. \$1000 PCD match for staff time to work on project grant proposals.
			\$					\$	
			\$					\$	
			\$					\$	
		Total	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$			\$ 10,000.00	
This task includes costs for evaluating the success of your project or program. This may include surveys, community readiness factors, landowner buy in for projects, completion of a Plan, etc. Please include anticipated deliverables and a detailed budget.	Effectiveness Monitoring		\$					\$	
			\$					\$	
			\$					\$	
		Total	\$					\$	
Funding applied to Project Administration must not exceed 10% of the total amount of nonpoint funding requested, or \$3,000, per project whichever is lower. Project includes normal business expenses and reporting requirements.	Administration	Mid/Annual/Interim Reports and Billing Statements	\$ 1,000.00					\$ 1,000.00	
		Draft/Final Report and Billing Statements	\$ 1,000.00					\$ 1,000.00	
		Communication with DED	\$ 1,000.00					\$ 1,000.00	
			\$					\$	
		Total	\$ 3,000.00	\$	\$			\$ 3,000.00	
Grand Totals			\$ 30,000.00	\$ 13,000.00	\$		\$ 43,000.00		

*Funding Request - Must not exceed \$30,000
 **Non-Federal Match - Can include in-kind materials.
 ***Other Funding - include federal match here, or, for example, other funding that is supporting the project but cannot be reported as match on this grant because it is
 ****Additional Information - Use to specify non-federal match and other funding sources, or use to justify cost if needed (e.g., hourly rates, rental costs, etc.)

**LETTERS
OF
SUPPORT**

2/11/2026

Montana Department of Environmental Quality
319 Nonpoint Source Program
PO Box 200901
Helena MT 59620

To Members of the DEQ Nonpoint Source Funding Panel,

I am a landowner in the Shields Valley and have been working with the Shields Valley Watershed Group for over 25 years. I am writing in support of the 2026 application from the Park Conservation District to obtain Capacity Funding from the 319 Grant Program. This funding is critical to continue the collaborative restoration efforts to address the water quality concerns within our Watershed.

The Shields River Watershed provides habitat for fish and wildlife, recreational opportunities, and irrigation water that supports local communities and ranching operations. The Shields River, from its headwaters to its confluence with the Yellowstone, is listed by Montana DEQ as an impaired waterbody, primarily from sedimentation, low flows and alterations to riparian vegetation and in-stream habitat. The Shields as well as The Upper Yellowstone Watershed groups work to develop community-based conservation plans, and the Park Conservation District plays a vital role in making these plans become real-world projects that improve the water quality of our watersheds.

The Shields Watershed group has over many years of effort developed a TMDL and a Watershed Restoration Plan and need this funding to continue working on fulfilling that Plan. I know that it would be impossible for me and my neighbors to fulfill these plans without the Park Conservation Districts help, and these capacity dollars would be greatly appreciated.

Thanks for the opportunity

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ned Zimmerman". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Ned Zimmerman



GOVERNOR GREG GIANFORTE

DNRC DIRECTOR AMANDA KASTER

February 5, 2026

Montana Department of Environmental Quality
319 Nonpoint Source Program
PO Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620

To Members of the DEQ Nonpoint Source Funding Panel,

The DNRC Water Sciences Bureau is pleased to support the 2026 application from the Park Conservation District to obtain Capacity Funding from the 319 Grant Program. This funding is critical to maintain the momentum that has been created in the Shields Valley to increase collaborative restoration efforts to address water quality concerns in the Watershed. This prioritized funding aligns with DNRC's mission to protect Montana's water resources and will build off DNRC work performed in the basin over the past two decades.

The Shields River Watershed provides habitat for fish and wildlife, and water that supports local communities and agricultural operations. The Park Conservation District (CD) and its watershed groups have been community leaders in developing and pushing forward collaborative and community-based conservation efforts in the Shields and Upper Yellowstone Watersheds. The Park CD is uniquely positioned, with its close and long-term relationship with landowners, to identify collaborative restoration projects throughout the Shields Valley under the 319 program. DNRC has performed work within the Shields Valley over the past several decades. Much of this work has been coordinated through the Park CD and their watershed groups, showcasing the CD's ability to effectively coordinate amongst local landowners. Capacity funding for the Park CD will allow them to effectively identify priority projects in the Lower Shields River watershed.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jacob Mohrmann". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Jacob Mohrmann, P.G. – Bureau Chief
Water Sciences Bureau – Water Resources Division



OTHER ATTACHMENTS