Water Quality Improvement Project (WQIP) Program

NEW YORK STATE | Department of Environmental Conservation

Questions and Answers – Updated July 10, 2026

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Q: When is the application deadline?

A: Applications will be accepted until 4:00PM EST on July 31, 2026 through the Consolidated Funding Application.

Q: Where do we go to view the webinar recording that includes the presentation slides?

A: The June 8, 2026 webinar recording and presentation slides are posted on the WQIP webpage at: https://dec.ny.gov/get-involved/grant-applications/wqip-program.

Q: Where on the website do I find the actual application?

A: Applications are accepted through the Consolidated Funding Application online portal.

Q: Is it possible to view the WQIP application questions in the Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) before filling out the application?

A: Yes, they are available to view or download on the CFA Program Questions webpage.

Q: Where can I find help filling out the CFA?

A: DEC does not administer the CFA. For technical questions about the CFA, contact the CFA helpdesk at CFA-Programs@ny.gov. Tips and resources are also available on the CFA Help webpage.

Q: Can an application be edited after submittal in the CFA?

A: Yes, from the CFA Application Manual: “After you finalize and submit your application, it cannot be modified or amended. If you would like to un-finalize your application to edit it, you must e-mail cfa-programs@ny.gov prior to the closing date. Once your application is un-finalized, it will be marked as in progress as opposed to finalized. In order to be considered for funding your application must be re-finalized by the deadline for the program(s) you are applying for. If the application is not re-finalized by the deadline, it will not be reviewed or considered for funding.”

Q: When will grant decisions be announced?

A: It is anticipated that awards will be announced in December 2026.

Q: How long does an awardee have to complete a WQIP project?

A: Projects selected for funding through WQIP have a maximum five-year project term. Applicants should not submit an application if they do not anticipate that their project can be completed within the specified contract term.

Q: Are costs incurred prior to June 1, 2026, eligible if they are billed after this date?

A: No, all work must occur after June 1, 2026 to be eligible for reimbursement.

Q: Are there any resources for State Financial System (SFS) questions/technical assistance after receiving a WQIP award?

A: Yes, there are resources available on how to use SFS. Contact information is included in the SFS Handbook and the SFS Resources webpage for Grant Applicants.

Q: Will there be future rounds of WQIP if the July 31, 2026 deadline is missed?

A: DEC anticipates that there will be future rounds of WQIP.

Q: Can an applicant submit more than one WQIP application and/or apply for multiple project types in a single application?

A: Eligible applicants may submit up to five applications per round for different projects. Separate applications are required if applying for more than one project type.

Q: Can an applicant apply for WQIP funding this round if they have an open WQIP contract or received a grant in a previous round?

A: For all projects, except road salt reduction, applicants may have open WQIP contract(s) and still apply for additional projects. However, the same projects that previously received funding will not be eligible again. A municipality benefitting from an open WQIP contract for road salt reduction practices must have the initial contract closed before reapplying. While WQIP will not fund the same scope of work more than once, applicants may receive funding for distinct phases if the proposed scope is clearly different from the previously funded work. Applicants should keep in mind that a municipality's "Experience and Ability" are considered during the application review process; therefore, municipalities are encouraged to make sure the existing WQIP grant is up to date with the Department.

Q: Can more than one entity apply for a WQIP grant together as co-applicants?

A: Only one entity can be the applicant as DEC can only execute a contract with one entity per project.

Q: Can multiple projects on the same property be funded through WQIP?

A: Yes, WQIP may fund multiple projects located on the same property. Separate applications must be submitted for each of the proposed projects. Also, the applications should clearly state how the projects coordinate and do not duplicate each other.

Q: If I submit multiple applications in different project type categories, would I be competing against myself?

A: No, applications are ranked and scored within a project type but not across project types. An applicant may only apply for one project type per individual application.

Q: Can for-profit entities be included as subcontractors to complete work under this funding opportunity?

A: Yes, sub-contractors can be for-profit entities. Common examples include engineering firms or consultants.

Q: Are all not-for profit corporations considered eligible applicants?

A: No, only 501(c)(3) not-for profits are an eligible applicant for certain project types.

Q: Are institutions of higher education eligible to apply?

A: Institutions of higher education may be eligible for certain project types if they are a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit institution. State public entities, such as public universities, are not eligible to apply for WQIP.

Q: Are public school districts eligible to apply?

A: Yes, public school districts fall under the definition of a municipality for the purposes of the WQIP program and are eligible to apply.

Q: Do letters of permission or municipal endorsement need to be submitted at the time of application?

A: Letters of permission or municipal endorsement are not required at the time of application for most project types under WQIP. There are two WQIP categories where a landowner agreement is required at the time of application if the project site is not owned by the applicant: Dam Safety Repair/Rehabilitation and Removal and Marine District Habitat Restoration. Letters of permission or municipal endorsement is a contract requirement, if awarded, for all projects.

Q: What is the best way to make sure my grant gets accepted?

A: As this is a competitive grant program, we cannot give application specific advice or help, and there is no guarantee of funding if you apply. A good way to see how well your

application will do is to self-score your application using the scoring rubric for your chosen project type. Also, make sure all required attachments are completed correctly and uploaded with the application.

Q: Does the WQIP program help with drinking water infrastructure?

A: Drinking water infrastructure is not eligible under WQIP. Refer to the Department of Health Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) webpage for more information on drinking water related grants: https://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/water/drinking/water.htm

Q: If we are not a "disadvantaged community", should we still consider applying?

A: Yes, while additional points are awarded to projects located in or benefitting disadvantaged communities and environmental justice areas, many projects outside of those areas are funded.

Q: Are Indigenous tribes/nations included in "municipalities" as eligible applicants?

A: Yes, Indian nations are included in the definition of municipality, which are an eligible applicant for this project type.

Q: Would a municipality located outside New York that owns water infrastructure in New York be eligible for funding?

A: No, only New York State municipalities are eligible to apply for funding under WQIP.

Q: Would pre or post construction water quality monitoring be eligible for funding under any of the WQIP categories?

A: Monitoring is only an eligible activity under two WQIP project types; Aquatic Connectivity and Marine District Habitat Restoration. Please refer to the WQIP Program Overview for limitations on monitoring expenses in each category.

Q: We are preparing a WQIP application and are trying to upload the engineering report. Our engineering report is 93 MB total. Even after dividing into two sections, and compressing each section into a zip file, both sections are still above 30 MB. Are there any alternative methods of uploading a large report?

A: Photos or other images within the report should be compressed to reduce the size of the PDF before compressing the sections into zip files. If that doesn't work, please reach out to CFA-Programs@ny.gov for further technical assistance. At this time, all attachments must be uploaded through the CFA. Review the Large Document Upload Instructions for additional tips.

Q: Is the "Attachment C" "Workplan" required for the application process, or is this required only after an award is made?

A: The Attachment C Workplan is only for awarded projects and is not required in the application.

FUNDING/BUDGET QUESTIONS

Q: Is there a minimum grant request amount?

A: No, there is no minimum request amount for WQIP.

Q: Does WQIP have a Median Household Income requirement?

A: No, WQIP does not have an income requirement.

Q: Is the grant a reimbursement grant or awarded up front to municipalities?

A: WQIP is a reimbursement grant. Municipalities can request an advance of up to 25% of the award amount for all projects except for wastewater treatment improvement projects.

Q: Are costs incurred prior to the time of award eligible for reimbursement?

A: Eligible costs incurred on June 1, 2026 or later may be eligible for reimbursement if you receive a WQIP grant. However, any costs incurred prior to execution of a contract are at the risk of the applicant. There is no guarantee that you will receive a WQIP grant or that the costs will be approvable for reimbursement.

Q: Does in-kind count towards match?

A: Yes, in-kind services to complete the project is an eligible form of match for WQIP.

Q: How should in-kind contributions be reflected in the budget pages? For example, do we estimate value of staff time that will be contributed in-kind?

A: In-kind match should be reflected as a match source in Part I of the budget form. In-kind staff time can also be reflected in the salary and fringe budget line in Part II of the budget form.

Q: Can federal funding, like USACE finding, be used as match?

A: Yes, federal funding sources can be used as match for WQIP.

Q: If your project has additional sources of funding in addition to the requested grant, should the budget show all sources of funding or just the WQIP request plus match?

A: The WQIP Budget Worksheet should not include all sources of funding, other than the requested WQIP grant amount and the match source.

Q: Design costs cannot exceed 20% of award amount. Does that mean it can be greater than 20% of the project and just not the award?

A: Depending on the project type, the combined costs for planning, design, administrative and construction oversight costs are allowed up to 20% of the award amount. Costs that exceed 20% would not be eligible and would be the responsibility of the applicant.

Q: In some cases, can funding support both final design and construction?

A: Yes, depending on the project type, both final design and construction would be eligible. Design costs are typically capped as a percentage of the overall award amount. Please refer to the WQIP Program Overview for more information on eligible costs for each project type.

Q: Are outreach costs considered eligible?

A: Outreach costs are not eligible. Please refer to the WQIP Program Overview for more information on eligible costs for each project type.

Q: Do municipalities need to get three quotes for project costs?

A: Municipalities are not required to submit quotes as part of a WQIP application. Municipalities should follow the typical procurement laws and procedures for local governments.

Q: Do all WQIP applications require a budget prepared by an engineer and supported by a proposal?

A: The WQIP Budget Worksheet does not need to be prepared by an engineer. If you are required to have an engineering report that is developed by an engineer for a category type, this report typically includes an estimated cost breakdown.

Q: Why is the budget worksheet not calculating match correctly for my project? My project's total cost will be $500,000. I am requesting 75% funding, with 25% local match. For my project, 75% of $500,000 would be $375,000 with a local match of $125,000. It seems that the calculator is taking 25% of requested funding, instead of 25% of total project cost.

A: The budget worksheet is calculating the match correctly. The 25% local match is based on the requested grant amount, not the total project cost. For a $500,000 project, the requested grant amount would be $400,000 and the match would be $100,000 (.25 x $400,000). Please refer to the Program Overviews for the maximum award amount that can be requested per project type.

Q: Does federal watershed specific funding mean applicants not within those areas get less options for funding and those within get more opportunities?

A: No, projects are ranked based on scoring criteria, not based on availability of funding for a particular watershed.

Q: Is it true that the requested funding and match combined cannot exceed 75% of the actual total project cost?

A: No, WQIP does not place a cap on the total project cost, but there is a cap on the amount that can be requested for a project type.

Q. Are successful grantees required to have a fully executed contract before incurring eligible costs for reimbursement or is there a period where retroactive eligible costs can be reimbursed?

A: For the 2026 round of funding, eligible activities after June 1, 2026, are eligible for reimbursement. However, reimbursement cannot be made until after a contract is executed.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

Q: If a proposed project is not physically within an Environmental Justice (EJ) district, but serves a considerable number of EJ-designated areas, can that be used in the application?

A: This depends on the location of the project and its proximity to an EJ or Disadvantaged Community (DAC) area. The EJ and DAC user guide provides the step-by-step process to determine if the project location would impact an EJ or DAC area.

Q: Can applicants provide additional documentation with the WQIP application?

A: Applicants should only submit the supporting documentation that is required by the WQIP application for their particular project type.

Q: Is a municipal resolution required to be submitted with a WQIP program application?

A: No, a municipal resolution is not required to be submitted with applications for the WQIP program. Depending on the project type, municipal resolutions are considered as part of the scoring criteria.

Q: If the county is the applicant and is not a certified climate smart community, would the project be considered eligible for climate smart status if it is located in or partially in a certified climate smart town?

A: These projects could potentially receive points for climate resiliency if the project is located in or serving a certified climate smart community.

Q: What is considered a DEC-approved watershed implementation plan?

A: DEC-approved watershed implementation plans include: a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL), Nine Element Watershed Plan, DEC Action Agenda, or a DEC HABs Action Plan. Find more information on DEC's Clean Water Plans webpage at: https://dec.ny.gov/environmental-protection/water/water-quality/clean-water-plans

Q: For the WQIP Grant, can we use flood plain maps already in our engineering report and submit as a separate PDF document? Or do we need to use a specific flood plain map generator or site?

A: The floodplain map in the engineering report may be used as long as it is uploaded as a separate document, the location of the project is clearly indicated, and the 1% or 0.2% annual chance floodplain areas are displayed.

Q: How do you define two or more WI/PWL segments?

A: WI/PWL segments are defined based on segment ID numbers; two or more segments are defined based on having two or more unique ID numbers.

Q: Does the SEQR review need to be completed before the application is submitted?

A: SEQR review is not an eligibility requirement and does not need to be completed before the application is submitted. SEQR status may be considered as part of the "project readiness" score for the project.

SCORING QUESTIONS

Q: What is the "Classification Points Factor" in the scoring criteria for several project types?

A: These points are allotted to a project based on the state-assigned classification of the receiving water at the point of discharge where appropriate. For more information on the classification of waterbodies in NYS, please refer to the DECinfo Locator where you will find the Waterbody Inventory/Priority Waterbodies List segment factsheets for each waterbody with additional information included.

Q: How is waterbody classification looked at for scoring?

A: Depending on the project type, waterbody classification may be reviewed based on which waterbody the project will improve. The DECinfo Locator can be used to locate the waterbody classification on the WI/PWL segment fact sheet.

Q: Will the REDC be scoring the grant application?

A: No, the Regional Economic Development Councils (REDCs) are not involved in the scoring process for WQIP.

Q: How are the Disadvantaged Community (DAC) percentage points determined?

A: The DAC Percentage points are based on the percentage assigned to the entity applying for the grant and are displayed in Attachment A in the WQIP Program Overview. The criteria used to determine the percentages can be found at this link: https://climate.ny.gov/resources/disadvantaged-communities-criteria.

FLOOD RESILIENCY REQUIREMENTS

Q: Does a project have to be in a floodplain to be eligible?

A: Applicants do not need to be in a floodplain to be eligible, but if work will take place in a floodplain, the applicant must submit a floodplain map with the location of the project indicated and explain how the project will mitigate flood hazard and not contribute to a rise in the base flood elevation. More information on how to develop a floodplain map can be found on the WQIP webpage under "Flood Resources".

Q: Where can I find floodplain maps and more information about WQIP flood resiliency requirements?

A: Resources to help with this application requirement are on DEC's WQIP webpage at: https://dec.ny.gov/get-involved/grant-applications/wqip-program. Links to the FEMA Flood Map Service, Floodway Development and Floodway Guidance, and National Flood Insurance Technical Bulletins are in the Applications Resources table on this webpage.

WASTEWATER TREATMENT IMPROVEMENT

Q: In past years has DEC awarded grants for projects that were not scored as a primary or secondary priority for wastewater?

A: Yes, DEC reserves the right to fund at least one project from each primary, secondary, and tertiary priority category and the general wastewater category scoring above 70 points.

Q: A municipality has an existing engineering report that functions as a Water/Sewer Master Plan, which outlines various issues across the sewer system and water infrastructure, with proposed improvements listed alongside each issue. Would this type of report meet the WQIP engineering report requirement. Specifically, if the project was to incorporate an alternative analysis into the report, would that make it eligible for use in a WQIP application? Or would the report still be considered ineligible under the program's guidelines?

A: In order to be eligible, the engineering report must include all of the elements listed in the Engineering Report Outline for New York State Wastewater Infrastructure Projects: https://efc.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2026/01/er-outline-ffy2026-rev-1a_clean_2026-01-1495.pdf. Note that WQIP does not fund infrastructure improvements for drinking water.

Q: Should the WI/PWL segment be selected based on the closest waterbody or the outfall location?

A: The WI/PWL segment what will be improved by the project should be selected.

Q: Can an applicant apply for two Wastewater Treatment Improvement projects (the same project type) in the same round, or will the applicant be competing against themselves?

A: Applicants can submit up to five applications for different projects that will be scored and ranked within a project type. You cannot apply with two applications for the same project. However, you may apply for different phases or distinct activities of a larger project. All applications are competing for funding, so it is suggested that applications be prioritized and that highest priority projects are finalized in the CFA portal first.

Q: Does the project map from a separate file have to be a USGS map or can it be a map from our engineering report?

A: The project map does not have to be a USGS map. The map from the engineering report could be sufficient as long as it is at a similar scale (1:24,000 scale) and is uploaded as a separate attachment to the application.

Q: Is decommissioning an existing wastewater treatment plant and pumping sewage to a neighboring town an eligible project?

A: Yes, this type of project is eligible under the wastewater treatment improvement category of WQIP.

Q: Are improvements to storm sewer infrastructure projects eligible for Grant Funding?

A: WQIP only funds improvements to sanitary sewers and combined sewers, not separate storm sewer systems. Under the Wastewater Treatment project type, applicants can apply to upgrade municipal combined sewer or sanitary sewer systems to meet CSO or SSO discharge requirements.

Q: Are funds available for switching from on-site septic systems to alternatives?

A: Yes, in the "Municipal Systems to Serve Multiple Properties with Inadequate Onsite Septic Systems" subtype, WQIP will fund projects to construct municipal systems to serve multiple properties with inadequate on-site septic systems.

Q: Regarding WQIP's wastewater treatment improvement priority categories, would a project that adds a dechlorination system to an existing disinfection system, as required by a DEC consent order, be considered a primary priority or would it fall under general wastewater?

A: Since the primary priority category is reserved for facilities that do not currently disinfect their effluent at all, this project would fall under the general wastewater priority category.

Q: If a county has a county-wide sewer district, would the applicant be the county or the sewer district?

A: Either the county or the sewer district would be eligible to apply, as they both fall under the definition of a municipality for the purposes of the WQIP program. The applicant will need to hold the contract, if awarded.

Q: *If a town is seeking funding for two wastewater treatment projects that share a SPDES permit, should two applications be submitted?*

A: As stated in the RFA: "Applicants may only apply for one project type per individual application; Only one application may be submitted per project per round; Applicants are limited to five applications per round". So, it is possible for the town to submit two WWTP applications for distinctly different projects.

NON-AGRICULTURAL NONPOINT SOURCE ABATEMENT AND CONTROL

Q: Under the Non-Agricultural NPS Abatement and Control category, how much of the grant funding can be used for final design costs?

A: For all Non-Agricultural NPS Abatement and Control projects, the combined costs related to planning, design, administrative and construction oversight costs cannot exceed 20% of the award amount.

Q: For Streambank and Riparian Buffers, would we need to submit some type of landscape design or plan or feasibility study?

A: For streambank stabilization and riparian buffers, a landscape design or plan is not required at the time of application. There are specific design criteria that would need to be met as part of the contract requirements post award. The design criteria are listed in the WQIP Program Overview. Funding is available through the Non-Agricultural Nonpoint Source and MS4 Planning Grant (NPG) for planning and design of streambank stabilization and riparian buffer projects.

VACUUM TRUCK FOR MS4 AREAS

Q: If applying for the WQIP Grant for Vacuum Trucks in Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Areas, is there a cutoff date to spend the grant money?

A: All projects must be completed and invoiced within a five-year contract period/term between June 1, 2026 through May 31, 2031. Costs outside of this contract period/term are ineligible.

Q: If the applicant were to purchase a vacuum truck after June 1, 2026, but before the grant was awarded, would reimbursement under the vacuum truck grant be allowable?

A: Yes, eligible costs incurred after June 1, 2026 are eligible for reimbursement if an award is received.

Q: For a vacuum truck grant, does the MS4 Comprehensive Mapping Worksheet need to be completed for the 5-year mapping requirements to apply for funding for a Vacuum Truck?

A: Yes, a Comprehensive Mapping Worksheet indicating all Basic Elements have been mapped before the time of application is required in order to be eligible for a vacuum truck. If a Basic Element is marked "in progress", the application will be ineligible.

Q: Can a municipality apply for a vacuum truck without sharing the use of the vacuum truck?

A: Yes, a municipality can apply for a vacuum truck without sharing the use of it. A project to purchase a vacuum truck that will be used by more than one regulated MS4 will receive additional points in the application review.

Q: Can the vacuum truck be a street sweeper also? And can the vacuum truck include a water jet?

A: Yes, combination street sweeper/vacuum trucks are eligible. Standalone street sweepers are not eligible. The vacuum truck can have a water jet.

Q: Is a refurbished vacuum truck eligible for WQIP?

A: Yes, refurbished or used vacuum trucks are eligible.

Q: Are vacuum trailers eligible?

A: No, vacuum trailers are not eligible at this time for Round 22, but it is being evaluated for future rounds.

LAND ACQUISITION FOR SOURCE WATER PROTECTION

Q: Where can I find the information for the Land Acquisition for Source Water Protection webinar?

A: Information regarding the Land Acquisition for Source Water Protection webinar is posted on the WQIP Land Acquisition Projects For Source Water Protection Toolkit webpage.

Q: Where can I identify public water supplies?

A: Contact your local county health departments to verify active public drinking water supplies. Contact information can be found by visiting: https://www.health.ny.gov/contact/contact_information/

Q: Once the land is acquired, can it be turned over to the local municipality? Can that happen within the five-year grant term, or would it need to happen after the term is completed?

A: Upon approval by DEC, an applicant who acquired an interest in real property using this grant funding may sell, lease, exchange or donate the real property to a not-for-profit or municipality, who will continue to use the real property for the same public purpose, without an express act of the New York State Legislature. Any sale, lease, exchange or donation that will result in the real property no longer having a public purpose must be approved by an express act of the New York State legislature. There are no time constraints on when that transfer must happen.

Q: Could a single WQIP Land Acquisition Program or Project application be submitted for a HUC 12 watershed that benefits multiple public water supplies?

A: Yes, a single application can be submitted for a HUC 12 watershed that will protect one or more active public water drinking water supplies within that watershed.

Q: Is there a maximum grant amount for Land Acquisition?

A: Yes, the maximum award amount for Land Acquisition is $5,000,000.

Q: Would the water source of private wells fall under the definition of public water source?

A: Only active public water supplies as defined by the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) are eligible. NYSDOH defines a public drinking water supply as “Any system with at least 5 service connections or that regularly serves an average of at least 25 people daily for at least 60 days out of the year”.

Q: The contract time period begins June 1, 2026, for awarded projects in the 2026 round of funding. Can easements or appraisals that need to be approved by DEC be completed after June 1, 2026, but before the contract is executed?

A: Yes, work on easements or appraisals for land acquisition projects can begin after June 1, 2026 but prior to contract execution. However, DEC will not approve any land acquisition documentation prior to contract execution. For land acquisition programs, parcels not identified in the initial application must be approved by DEC prior to commencing any work.

Q: Are donated parcels (serving as match) required to follow the same acquisition due diligence requirements, such as following the new appraisal and survey requirements?

A. Yes. Page 67 of the 2026 WQIP Program Overview states, “Donated parcels or parcels to be used as match are subject to the terms of the grant and applicable land acquisition document requirements.”

Q: Are parcels donated before June 1, 2026, eligible to be used as match?

A: No, parcels donated prior to June 1, 2026, are not eligible for local match. Donated parcels or parcels to be used as match are subject to the terms of the grant and applicable land acquisition document requirements, including the June 1 date.

Q: Are baseline documentation reports an eligible WQIP cost for fee simple acquisition projects?

A: Yes, baseline documentation reports are an eligible expense.

Q: Are there any additional details you can provide about the stewardship fee as an eligible grant/match cost? Can the stewardship fee be included in project budgets for fee acquisitions? Are there any standards or requirements to keep in mind when developing the stewardship fee?

A: Stewardship fees are an eligible expense, typically in the form of a one-time deposit to a stewardship fund that will cover annual stewardship costs for the parcel(s) in perpetuity. It is recommended that the Land Trust Alliance Standards and Practices for Fee Land Stewardship be followed: https://landtrustalliance.org/resources/learn/topics/land-trust-standards-and-practices/standard12 .

Q: Where can we find resources on the property use limitations and disclosures?

A. Find information in the WQIP Program Overview under the Land Acquisition public access templates and the conservation easement. It is important to disclose any potential property uses at the time of parcel proposal or project application.

Q: Our parcel includes an existing residential structure and proposed riparian buffer restoration/enhancement improvements. If demolition of the structure and removal of debris are necessary to establish, restore, or enhance the required riparian buffer, can those demolition and site restoration costs be treated as eligible WQIP land acquisition/source water protection costs?

A: Any remediation/restoration work associated with removal of contaminants or structures (e.g., hazardous waste, petroleum products, demolition and/or removal of structures) are ineligible costs (page 74 of the WQIP Round 22 Program Overview).

Q: Should applicants provide any documentation regarding the status of water withdrawal permit compliance regarding an in-process application?

A: The submission of a water withdrawal permit modification application is not required prior to application. If awarded, this is a contract requirement that may be submitted after the contract is executed.

Q: Can you provide more information about the Drinking Water Source Protection Program Plans that are identified in the land acquisition scoring criteria?

A: A list of communities that are participating in the Drinking Water Source Protection Program can be found on NYS DEC's website under DWSP2 Participating Communities: Drinking Water Source Protection Program (DWSP2) - NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation. As noted underneath the table, the bold text signifies that a plan has been state accepted. You will need to contact the DWSP2 participant for information on the critical (and/or source water) area. The critical (and source water) area is not the same in every plan as it is specific to the drinking water source being protected.

Q: Are supplemental support materials such as an authorizing/match resolution document, local planning documents that are not a DWSP2 Plan, or letters of support accepted, and would they contribute to the project score?

A: While letters of support/commitment from the landowners are not required, it is a part of the scoring rubric under the project readiness section. Letters of support from community members/municipal officials, authorizing/match resolution documents, or local planning documents will not contribute to the project score. Any documents required for scoring will have a specific attachment question for that document.

SALT STORAGE AND ROAD SALT REDUCTION

Q: Can more than one municipality apply for road salt reduction equipment on one application? For example, neighboring towns?

A: More than one municipality cannot apply on one application, but one municipality can apply on behalf of other municipalities. A municipal applicant may apply on behalf of more than one municipality who will use the equipment, but DEC can only contract with and reimburse one municipality. The applicant would need to work out their own agreement with the other municipalities if they were going to share the equipment or brine storage.

Q: Are registration fees for road salt reduction trainings eligible to be reimbursed through the WQIP program?

A: Costs associated with road salt reduction trainings are not eligible for reimbursement through a WQIP grant.

Q: What constitutes existing salt storage? If a town has a very small shed for storing salt, to the point where they are getting multiple salt deliveries to meet their needs (mixing with sand), does that automatically drop them to a secondary priority? The idea would be to do away with the existing smaller structure and place the open sand pile and salt pile under a larger structure for both storage and mixing.

A: This would be considered a replacement and/or expansion salt storage structure project.

Q: Are repairs to an existing salt storage structure without replacement or expansion eligible?

A: No, repairs to an existing salt storage structure that does not involve replacement or expansion is not eligible for funding.

Q: Would the following activities count towards the matching amount or qualify for WQIP reimbursement: Replacing (and moving) the underground diesel tanks, building a new truck washing facility, drill a new well and seal the existing one, and building a new salt shed?

A: Projects to construct a new structure to enclose an uncovered salt or salt/sand mixture storage pile or projects to replace an existing salt or salt/sand mixture storage structure are eligible under WQIP. The rest of the activities listed would not be eligible for WQIP and could not be used as match.

Q: Is it feasible to submit an application for both salt storage and road salt reduction management practices? Could funding be awarded for one of the components, or part of the application?

A: The CFA application questions are different for salt storage and road salt reduction. Therefore, you need to submit two applications—one for your salt storage project and one for your salt reduction project.

Q: Is road salt reduction truck/equipment eligible for this grant?

A: Road salt reduction equipment, such as brine making equipment, brine storage tanks, live-edge plow blades/plow guards, truck mounted brine spreading equipment, and GPS equipment/sensors are eligible for WQIP funding. Vehicles/trucks are not eligible.

Q: Are weather stations eligible equipment purchases as part of this application? Weather stations provide real time road condition data to highway departments to help them make decisions about plowing and salting. These sensors are based on a lease agreement for the technology.

A: This type of equipment would be considered eligible under "GPS equipment and sensors to track road salt or brine application, or pavement temperature to inform road salt or brine application". As noted in the program overview, this equipment cannot exceed 20% of the total project cost. While the purchase of the equipment would be eligible, leasing of equipment or technology would not be eligible.

Q: Would "deconstruction" of an old salt shed be an eligible cost under the salt storage category? What about security measures such as security cameras?

A: Neither deconstruction costs nor security measures would be eligible costs.

Q: If a town is applying for a salt shed, but the floodplain boundary runs through the town's property, does that disqualify the project? Or is there a buffer distance around the floodplain that the building would have to be outside of?

A: Building within the floodplain would not disqualify the project. Projects that move storage outside the floodplain are preferred and will receive additional points in scoring. Projects occurring within the floodplain must meet additional requirements as listed in the WQIP Program Overview.

Q: We are a Soil and Water Conservation District, and we are looking to upgrade salt storage for two towns. Can we do one application and include both towns in it, or do we need to do one application for each town?

A: Submit a separate application for each town, as they are considered separate projects.

DAM SAFETY REPAIR/REHABILITATION AND DAM REMOVAL

Q: For Dam Removal projects, it is clear that Class B and C dams are the priority. Will Class A dam removals also be funded or would that apply to only Class A dam repairs?

A: Only Class B (High Hazard) and Class C (Intermediate Hazard) dams are eligible under the Dam Safety Repair/Rehabilitation and Dam Removal category. Dam removal of a Class A dam may be eligible under the Aquatic Connectivity category if the dam is a barrier to aquatic connectivity.

Q: If the dam is currently going through a license surrender process, can we still apply for this funding?

A: The license surrender process would need to be complete by the time of application in order to be eligible for funding.

Q: Is there funding for the removal of high hazard dams?

A: Yes. This grant is for the repair, rehabilitation or removal of Class B Intermediate and Class C High Hazard Dams. If the project is specific to improving aquatic connectivity, there is also potential for dam removal in that category.

Q: Would engineering fees for the safety study and flood control design be eligible for the current grant program?

A: Under the WQIP program, costs for the safety study or a flood control design are not eligible. For a WQIP Dam Safety Repair/Rehabilitation and Dam Removal project to be eligible, an engineering report much be prepared, stamped, and dated by a P.E. and submitted with the application. You can review the required attachments and eligible costs in the Program Overview posted on the WQIP webpage: https://dec.ny.gov/get-involved/grant-applications/wqip-program.

Q*: For Dam Safety, the RFA says the first priority is the removal of a high hazard (C) or intermediate hazard (B) dams, and secondary priority is intermediate hazards. I thought class B was considered intermediate hazard. Can you please clarify the priorities?*

A: The primary priority for Dam Safety is the rehabilitation of a high hazard (class C dam) OR the removal of either a class C or intermediate hazard class B dam. So the first priority is the removal of high hazard or intermediate hazard dams, or the rehabilitation of a high hazard dam. Secondary priority is rehabilitation of an intermediate hazard dam to bring the dam into conformance with NYS Guidelines.

Q: What can we do if we are a private dam owner that owns a high hazard dam? Can we align with a municipality to apply for the grant?

A: A municipality or 501(c)(3) not for profit can apply to do the project with a letter from the dam owner authorizing the applicant to do the work with the application. However, the dam must meet the eligibility requirements in the RFA, and all work done for the project must be organized and completed by the applicant or a subcontractor they hire. No reimbursements would be sent to the private dam owner.

AQUATIC CONNECTIVITY

Q: Is a hydrologic/hydraulic analysis required to be submitted with the application or required to be developed post-award?

A: The hydrological and hydraulic analysis is not a requirement to apply for a WQIP aquatic connectivity project but may be required post-award. As stated on DEC's Floodplain Management webpage (footnoted in the Program Overview): "Any development within a regulatory floodway, as indicated on a community's FIRM or Flood Boundary and Floodway Map, requires a hydraulic analysis to demonstrate "no-rise" in flood levels as a result of the project before a floodplain development permit can be issued". Requests for modeling can be sent to floodplain@dec.ny.gov; please include the community and stream reach needed with the request.

Q: We plan to apply for the Aquatic Connectivity subtype for implementation of a fish passage. Are we able to count the design phase as match for this project?

A: The combined total of planning, design, administrative and construction oversight costs up to 20% of award amount can be used as match for aquatic connectivity projects.

FISH AND WILDLIFE HABITAT RESTORATION AND ENHANCEMENT

Q: A municipality is interested in applying to complete an invasive species removal project on a lake.

A: Invasive species removal would only be eligible if it were part of an overall wetland habitat or riparian corridor restoration project. Invasive species removal within a lake would not be eligible.

Q: In this project type, how are aquatic connectivity projects viewed? In addition to restoration projects, we may be interested in including 1 or 2 culvert replacement projects as well.

A: Culvert replacement projects are not eligible under the Fish and Wildlife Habitat Restoration and Enhancement category. However, you could apply for the culvert replacement in the aquatic connectivity category. Habitat restoration projects that are directly associated with a recently completed or approved aquatic connectivity project will receive higher points.

Q: For a project in a riparian corridor, how do I determine whether to apply for a project under the Fish and Wildlife Habitat category or the Nonpoint Source Project category?

A: While your project may have co-benefits, the WQIP project type to select depends on the primary goal of the project. If the project is to restore the riparian corridor to primarily address a nutrient of concern to improve water quality by way of filtering nutrients and/or sediment and preventing streambank/shoreline erosion, then you could apply under the Nonpoint Source – Riparian Buffers project type. However, if the project's main goal is to improve the ecological habitat condition of the riparian corridor to serve as a high-quality habitat (e.g., spawning, nursery, wintering, migratory, nesting, breeding, or foraging environment) for one or more species of conservation concern or interest, then you could apply under the Fish and Wildlife Habitat project type. You can review the scoring criteria for both project types to help determine in which category your project may score higher.

Q: Are there any organisms the DEC is particularly interested in focusing on in terms of habitat quality improvement?

A: Please refer to the Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SCGN) on DEC's State Wildlife Action Plan webpage. For our aquatic connectivity and habitat restoration project types, we prioritize projects that improve habitat for SGCN under the "Project Impact" scoring criteria.

Q: Would multiple projects on the watershed scale be considered for funding? How would they be scored against projects with one location?

A: Single applications may include multiple project sites. When this occurs, each project site will be scored independently and then averaged together to yield a total application score. Additionally, the 2026 scoring criteria awards 2 points for projects that include multiple sites.

Marine District Habitat Restoration:

Q: Are shellfish habitat restoration projects considered for these grant opportunities?

A: Yes, restoration or enhancement of shellfish and shellfish beds for the purpose of improving the ecological condition of the waters within the marine district is an eligible activity under Marine District Habitat Restoration

CONTACT INFORMATION

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