

A close-up photograph of water splashing, with numerous droplets and ripples visible. The water is a deep blue color, and the splashes are captured in mid-air, creating a dynamic and textured scene. The background is slightly blurred, emphasizing the foreground splashes.

**604(b) Water Quality
Management Planning
Grant Program**

Pre-RFR Informational
Meeting
June 16, 2021

Agenda

- MassDEP Nonpoint Source Program Team Introductions (5 minutes)
 - Dr. Padmini Das, Nonpoint Source Program Section Chief
 - Meghan Selby, Section 604(b) Program Coordinator
 - Malcolm Harper, Section 319 Program Coordinator
 - Judy Rondeau, Watershed Specialist & Outreach Coordinator
- 604(b) Program Overview (15-30 minutes)
- Questions/Project Idea Discussion

Overview

- Section 604(b) of the Clean Water Act provides grants to eligible recipients to determine the nature, extent, and causes of water quality issues and develop plans to restore or protect water quality.
- Focus on nonpoint source pollution

Grant Program Goals

The goals of this grant program include, but are not limited to:

- Identify sources of impairment(s) to waterbodies listed on the State's [Integrated List of Waters](#), which are waters that are not currently meeting the State's Surface Water Quality Standards ([314 CMR 4.00](#)).
- Identify threats to healthy watersheds.
- Determine solutions to address sources of pollution to partially or fully restore segments not meeting the Surface Water Quality Standards.
- Support projects, such as watershed-based plans, implementation plans and BMP designs that they can be used as basis for future Section 319 projects.

FFY2022 Program Priorities

- Watershed-Based Plans (319 requirement)
 - Impaired Waters or Healthy Watersheds
- Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment
- Development of Implementation Plans
 - Includes preliminary designs (up to 50%)
- Green Infrastructure and LID Projects
- Projects that results in deliverables that can advance on to Section 319 for implementation funding

Priority Waterbodies and Watersheds

- Priority Segments (nonpoint source impaired waters that are most likely to respond to remediation efforts that will result in meeting water quality standards).
- Waters assessed as impaired or with a history of harmful algal blooms
- Waters included in the [National Water Quality Initiative](#) (NWQI)

Eligibility

- Regional Planning Agencies
- Council of Governments
- Counties
- Conservation Districts
- Cities and Towns
- Other substate public planning agencies and interstate agencies.
- Private organizations are not eligible but can partner with eligible entities.

Funding

- \$165,000
- \$25,000-\$50,000 per award on average
- Match is not required but preferred
- D/MBE goal 4.2% and D/WBE goal 4.5%
- Approximately two-year duration
- Reimbursement basis
- 10% retainage is withheld

Procurement Schedule

- Request for Responses issued June 29th (planned)
 - Posted on COMMBUYS, MassDEP website, and email blast
 - Once RFR is issued no project specific communication allowed.
- Proposals are due August 17, 2022
- Selection process
- Applicants notified in Winter 2022
- Contract start date January 1, 2023

Most Competitive Projects

- Support watershed-wide water quality management activities and creation of watershed-based plans
- Identify sources of water quality impairment due to nonpoint source pollution in high priority waterbodies
- Use watershed-based plans to build partnerships and build capacity as well as identify water quality remediation or protection strategies in high priority waterbodies
- Link the proposed BMP to the pollutant of concern
- Provide clearly defined, practical, and cost-effective objectives
- Build partnerships with and benefit Environmental Justice communities

Most Competitive Projects

- Consider long-term resiliency to climate change impacts in site prioritization, design, siting, and selection of BMPs
- Propose strategies with a high likelihood of success
- Support a future Section 319 application

General Application Advice

- **Understand the Problem**

- Clearly outline problem (why, what, where)
- Identify and discuss the specific impairment from the 2018/2020 Integrated List of Waters (e.g. Bacteria, Nutrients, Exotic Plants)
- Review past studies, data, etc. and provide summary in your proposal (Assessment needs – DEP’s Watershed Assessment Reports)
- Locus map & detailed map of project area

- **Devising a Plan**

- Clearly outline the goals and approach (who, how, when)
- Clearly connect the “solution” to the “problem”
- Show rationale for location and BMP selection and /or sampling locations

General Application Advice

- Assume the reviewer is not familiar with the project
- Pay attention to evaluation criteria (RFR Section 4A)
- **Budget** – Salary (list staff and salary range), Subcontracts, Equipment/Supplies, Mileage (\$0.585 per mile) Only – no “Travel”
- **QAPPs required** for all Assessment & Modeling work. Recommend checking with Lab to determine detection levels. How low can they go??
- **Preliminary Designs** – Eligible up to 50% design level
- **DBE** - Grantee must make good faith effort to meet 4.2% DMBE and 4.5% DWBE goals. Goals are calculated off the total project cost, not just the grant award
- See RFR Section 4B- Requirements For Application Structure and Content

Additional Resources

Massachusetts 2018/2020 Integrated List of Waters, Assessment Reports, Draft and Final TMDL analyses:

<http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/massdep/water/watersheds/total-maximum-daily-loads-tmdls.html#2>

Technical Memoranda: MassDEP water quality monitoring efforts are reflected in these technical memoranda.

Water Quality Monitoring Data: Quality-assured water quality monitoring data and GIS coverages of sampling locations.

Watershed-Based Planning Tool

The WBP will guide a user to select a watershed and complete the nine elements necessary to comprise a watershed-based plan: <http://prj.geosyntec.com/MassDEPWBP>

- WBP-tool Element Specific Guidance
- WBP-Tool [Provisional Review Checklist](#) and [Rating Scoresheet](#)
- Example [Completed WBPs](#)

EPA's Quick Guide to Developing Watershed Plans to Restore and Protect Out Waters

Additional Resources (continued)

Examples of Past Projects (Indicative Summaries)

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/s604b-water-quality-management-planning-project-summaries-ffy1991-2020/download>

The Clean Water Toolkit

A manual in electronic format that provides an overview of nonpoint source related issues, fact sheets and detailed information about best management practices to address nonpoint source problems:

<http://prj.geosyntec.com/npsmanual/default.aspx>

Stormwater:

- *Funding Opportunities:* <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/available-funding-for-stormwater-projects-in-massachusetts>
- *University of New Hampshire Stormwater Center* - : <http://www.unh.edu/unhsc/>
- *Stormwater Policy and General Publications*
<http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/massdep/water/wastewater/stormwater.html>
- *Cornell Extreme Precipitation Analysis* - website, providing rainfall analysis calibrated to the present climate: <http://precip.eas.cornell.edu/>
- [MA Stormwater Handbook](#)
- [EPA Opti Tool](#) (Cost Information)
- MWC [BMP Cost Catalog](#)

Questions?

MassDEP Grants Website:

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/grants-financial-assistance-watersheds-water-quality>

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