



**EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS**  
Rebecca Tepper, Secretary  
Grant Announcement

**BID # Bid BD-26-1042-ENV-ENV01-126442**

**Project #FY27LAND0009**

**Dated: March 11, 2026**

**Conservation Partnership Grant FY 27**

**1. GRANT OPPORTUNITY SUMMARY:**

**A. PROPOSALS SOUGHT FOR:** Financial assistance to qualified 501(c)(3) organizations and conservation districts for the acquisition of conservation land.

**B. OVERVIEW AND GOALS:** The Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) protects, conserves, and restores the natural resources of the Commonwealth. To fulfill this mission, Rebecca Tepper, Secretary of EEA, makes available funding for the FY 2027 Conservation Partnership Grant Program. This program provides funding to assist qualified 501(c)(3) organizations and conservation districts in acquiring interests in land suitable for conservation or recreation purposes.

The Conservation Partnership Grant Program is a component of the Healey-Driscoll Administration's goal of providing outdoor recreational opportunities, conserving natural resources and open space, and addressing climate change. This BID is part of the Administration's efforts to permanently preserve the Commonwealth's rich natural heritage for generations to come. The Conservation Partnership Grant Program also supports Executive Order 569, which calls for state government to adapt to climate change and build a more resilient Commonwealth, by including resiliency criteria in its rating system.

**C. ELIGIBLE PROJECTS:**

- 1) Land or a Conservation Restriction (CR) purchase by an eligible Applicant
- 2) Due diligence costs for donations of land or CRs to an eligible Applicant

See further detail on eligible projects in Section 2B.

**D. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS:** This BID is open to qualified 501(c)(3) organizations that have been formed for one of the purposes described in Section 4 of Chapter 180 of the General Laws and to conservation districts. An organization must have 501(c)(3) status at the time an application is submitted. See further detail on eligible applicants in Section 2A.

**E. APPLICATION DEADLINE: Monday, July 13, 2026 at 11:59 pm.** See further detail on deadlines and grant program calendar in Section 4.

**F. FUNDING AVAILABILITY:** The maximum grant award for the purchase of land or a CR is \$425,000. The maximum award for due diligence costs related to a gift of land or CR is \$20,000. The maximum reimbursement amount is 50% of the total eligible project cost up to the applicable grant award maximum. Exceptions may be made at the Secretary's discretion. There is no guarantee that monies will be awarded. See further detail on funding availability in Section 2E.

**G. NON-STATE FUNDING REQUIREMENT:** Applicants selected to receive grant funding must document the use of funds, or contributions from other sources comprising at least 50% of total project costs. Approved expenditures must not be made until after the selected applicant has an executed contract with the Commonwealth. See further detail on budget requirements in Section 2F.

**H. TOTAL ANTICIPATED DURATION OF CONTRACT(S):** Contracts issued pursuant to this BID must expend all eligible project costs on or before June 30, 2027 to be eligible for reimbursement. See further detail on anticipated duration of contract(s) in Section 2H.

**I. REGULATIONS, STATUTES, OR AUTHORIZATION GOVERNING THIS GRANT PROGRAM:** Subject to 815 CMR 2.00, this grant program provides funding to assist qualified 501(c)(3) organizations and conservation districts in acquiring property interests for conservation or recreation purposes as authorized in Chapter 209 of the Acts of 2018. See further detail in Attachment C.

**J. CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Darya Mattes  
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs  
100 Cambridge Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Boston, MA 02114  
darya.mattes@mass.gov  
(617) 721-4864  
<https://www.mass.gov/how-to/apply-for-a-conservation-partnership-grant>

## **2. PERFORMANCE AND CONTRACT SPECIFICATIONS**

**A. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS:**

This BID is open to qualified 501(c)(3) organizations and conservation districts. Multiple contracts may be awarded to the same applicant under this BID. Applicants may choose to package several adjacent landholdings into one application. Unrelated, discontinuous parcels must be submitted as separate projects in individual applications.

**B. ELIGIBLE PROJECT(S)/SCOPE(S) OF WORK:**

EEA seeks to further the conservation of suitable conservation and recreation land so that outdoor recreational opportunities are available to every Massachusetts resident. Eligible projects include:

1.) *Purchase of land or a CR*

An eligible Applicant may request grant funding for reimbursement of acquisition and due diligence costs associated with the purchase of land (fee simple) or a perpetual CR as defined in

G.L. c. 184, § 31 that provides appropriate public access. Conversion of a term-limited CR to a permanent CR is eligible for funding. Eligibility for funding is limited to costs associated with the purchase of land or interests in land that the Applicant intends to hold in perpetuity.

*2.) Due diligence costs for gifts of land or a CR to an eligible Applicant*

An eligible Applicant may request grant funding for reimbursement of eligible due diligence costs associated with a land or CR gift that provides appropriate public access or for the due diligence costs associated with the acquisition of land.

Land that is already permanently protected through Article 97 (e.g., was purchased with EEA grant funding or municipal funding for open space protection), is already held in fee by a land trust, or is protected under CR, Watershed Preservation Restriction (WPR), or Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) is not eligible for funding. However, land purchased by a third party non-profit conservation organization on behalf of the Applicant no earlier than July 11, 2025 where it can be documented to DCS's satisfaction that the property was purchased with the explicit intention of pre-acquiring the land on behalf of the Applicant in anticipation of successful fundraising by the Applicant, including a potential Conservation Partnership grant may be eligible for funding. Any exercise of this exemption is at the risk of the non-profit organization and the Applicant. Said documentation can, for example, be a copy of correspondence/contract/minutes between the Applicant and the pre-acquiring entity, often initiated by the Applicant, asking them to play that role due to circumstances. Any exercise of this exemption is at the risk of the non-profit organization and the Applicant.

Lands enrolled in Chapter 61, 61A, or 61B are not classified as permanently protected land and are eligible to receive funding. Unprotected state or municipal land is also eligible.

Land designated as development area priorities as described in the [South Coast Rail Corridor Plan](#), Merrimack Valley Land Use Priority Plan, or the I-495/MetroWest Development Compact Plan, or other regional plans will not be eligible for funding. See [Executive Order No. 525](#).

**NOTE: Preservation of Agricultural Land:** Executive Order 193 discourages the irreversible conversion of the Commonwealth's productive agricultural land base. State grants shall not be used to encourage the irreversible conversion of agricultural land to other uses when feasible alternatives are available. In the event that all feasible alternatives have been explored, and the conversion of suitable agricultural lands to non-agricultural use, such as habitat, remains the only feasible alternative to protection of open space, a mitigation plan must be developed to be eligible for reimbursement under a state grant. Projects that would convert any prime agricultural lands should consult with the Department of Agricultural Resources at (617) 626-1700 prior to submitting an application.

**C. APPRAISAL REQUIREMENTS:**

Applications must include the appropriate type of appraisal. Appraisals must have an effective date no earlier than one year prior to the grant application deadline. The Applicant or one of the Applicant's project partners must be the client for the appraisal; *the owner of the property cannot be the client*. All appraisal reports must be prepared in accordance with the EEA Specifications for Analytical Narrative Appraisal Reports. See the DCS website for detailed Appraisal Report Requirements at <https://www.mass.gov/doc/eea-grant-programs-appraisal-report-requirements/download>.

**Parcels with an estimated value of under \$350,000:**

One certified appraisal report, or restricted appraisal report.

**Parcels with an estimated total value of over \$350,000:**

One certified appraisal report. *For parcels with an estimated total value of over \$1,000,000 applicants are strongly encouraged to obtain a second appraisal report or review appraisal.*

EEA reserves the right to request additional or review appraisals as it deems necessary.

Applications for projects that involve a land or Conservation Restriction donation to the Applicant **DO NOT require an appraisal**, market analysis, or opinion of value.

**D. EVALUATION CRITERIA:**

Each application will be scored using the criteria below. See Attachment B for complete project selection criteria.

**1. Organizational Characteristics (16%)**

Applicants with Articles of Incorporation that reflect land conservation and recreation as a mission, with demonstrated capacity to successfully complete a purchase or gift of conservation land, and with experience successfully stewarding fee or CR interests, or experienced partners that will provide needed assistance. To further the work of volunteer-led organizations, organizations with fewer full-time employees will receive higher scores. Note that organizations of any size that meet the qualifications in Section 2A are welcome to apply.

**2. Land Protection (15%)**

Projects that protect larger areas and promote landscape connectivity by abutting existing protected open space.

**3. Biodiversity and Natural Resource Protection (25%)**

Projects within or adjacent to designated Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program BioMap Core Habitat, Critical Natural Landscape, or Forest Core, that are ranked highly for climate change resiliency and carbon storage based on its TNC map score, and the resource value of which would be more significantly impacted by potential development.

**4. Working Farms and Forests (7%)**

Project parcel(s) enrolled in Chapter 61or 61A or managed under a Forest Stewardship program, and/or will conserve forested or agricultural lands.

**5. Recreational Opportunities (22%)**

Project that will provide specific types of public recreational opportunities, including to people with disabilities; will serve an under-served area for outdoor recreation based on the amount of protected open space per capita; and will advance goals, objectives, or action plan items stated in the community's *current* Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) and/or Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP).

**6. Overall Project Quality and Importance (15%)**

Overall quality and importance of the proposed project considering the combination of criteria described above, as well as whether the project is within a [Burdened Area](#).

**E. FUNDING AVAILABILITY, BUDGETING GUIDELINES & ALLOWABLE EXPENDITURES:**

Reimbursement rate: Up to 50% of total eligible project costs; eligible project costs include the value of any gifts or bargain sales that partners may secure as ‘match’

Maximum award amount: \$425,000 for purchase of conservation land or CR  
\$20,000 for due diligence costs for a gift of land or CR

<p><b>Eligible expense categories:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Title search</li><li>• Acquisition (appraised value or negotiated price, whichever is less)</li><li>• Other contractual services, such as consultants to negotiate transaction terms, facilitate due diligence and other services for the conservation transaction (up to 10% of grant request, and with EEA approval) – include sufficient detail in project budget</li><li>• Baseline Documentation Report</li><li>• Chapter 21E assessment</li><li>• Survey</li><li>• Legal fees associated with the acquisition</li><li>• Recording fees</li></ul>	<p><b>Ineligible expense categories:</b> <i>Please note that this is not a complete list.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Application preparation or submission costs in response to BID</li><li>• Staff salaries</li><li>• Trail construction</li><li>• Signage</li><li>• Stewardship or monitoring endowments</li><li>• Equipment or goods</li></ul>
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All contracts shall be subject to available funding, whether through the appropriation and authorization of sufficient funds or the receipt of sufficient revenues. If available funding ceases for any reason, a contract shall be deemed under suspension and contract performance must halt. A contractor will not be entitled to compensation for any performance provided during the period of contract suspension. EEA may lift the suspension if available funding is received. In the absence of foreseeable available funding, EEA may terminate the contract.

**F. BUDGET REQUIREMENT:**

Applicants must submit the appropriate type of appraisal, the estimated total eligible project cost, and the specific grant request as part of the application package.

A detailed budget for all project component(s) is required. EEA may approve or disapprove individual portions of a proposed budget. Grant awards may not exceed 50% of total project costs for a maximum of \$425,000. Reimbursement requests for individual eligible costs may be up to 100% of the cost, provided the sum of reimbursement requests do not exceed 50% of documented project costs. Expenses incurred prior to the execution of a contract with the Commonwealth are not eligible for reimbursement. All approved project costs must be expended by the applicant on or before June 30,

2027 to be eligible for reimbursement. Applicants must provide documentation of Applicant's payment when filing for reimbursement for each approved project cost.

**G. PROJECT TERMS:**

Awarded projects will be required to abide by the Standard Commonwealth of Massachusetts Terms and Conditions. All final contracts are subject to successful negotiation of a Final Scope of Services. EEA does not guarantee that any contracts may result from this BID, or that any particular funding amount will be awarded. Awarded contracts will be reviewed during their course and, upon request by the Contractor, may be extended or otherwise amended at the sole discretion of EEA. Any extension granted will not necessarily change the monetary value of the contract.

**H. ANTICIPATED DURATION OF CONTRACTS:**

Expected date of contract execution is about 120 days from the application deadline. All contracts will end on June 30, 2027. To be eligible for reimbursement, land purchase and other reimbursable expenditures must be incurred on or before this date. Extension of the contract is at the sole discretion of EEA and is unlikely to occur.

**I. DELIVERABLES AND OWNERSHIP:**

The purchase of fee simple land under this BID requires the conveyance of a CR to the municipality in which the project is located, a federal or state agency, a not-for-profit corporation, or combination of these entities. In the case of a CR acquisition, the CR must be co-held by the Applicant and the municipality in which the land is located, a state agency, or another land trust, as required by Chapter 286 of the Acts of 2014. **The CR must be reviewed and approved by DCS and recorded at the Registry of Deeds prior to requesting reimbursement.** The model CR is available on the [DCS website](#) along with the CR review form. When prepared, the draft CR and CR review form should be e-mailed to DCS for review prior to signature, using the contact information on the DCS website. Please allow adequate time for CR review and approval by the necessary parties (e.g. municipal officials, DCS, and/or appropriate state agency).

**J. REPORTING:**

No interim reports are required.

**K. INVOICING:**

The Conservation Partnership Grant Program is a reimbursement program. Award recipients must submit the following documentation when filing for reimbursement:

- Reimbursement Billing Form and Project Cost Worksheet (form provided after contract has been executed)
- Copies of recorded documents (deed and/or CR)
- Copy of title certification (not title insurance)
- Copy of recent survey (recorded)
- Copies of Applicant's cancelled checks (both sides), Applicant's wire transfer statements, Applicant's bank statements, or attested statement of Treasurer indicating the amount of payment, date paid, associated check or transaction numbers, and authority of payment
- CR language that ensures appropriate public access (copy)
- Photo of sign giving Conservation Partnership appropriate funding credit

- GIS Data Entry Form (provided once contract has been executed)

### 3. INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPLICATION SUBMISSION

#### A. APPLICATION SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS:

All Applicants must now use the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) new EEA [Grant Management System](#) (GMS), a user-friendly platform designed to enhance the experience for applicants seeking grants. To submit a FY 27 Conservation Partnership grant application, please create a username and password and start the validation process, which could take several days to complete. Please note that at least one representative from the Applicant's organization must have a valid account to apply for the grant. Please refer to Attachment D for further instructions regarding the GMS. The application must be received by Monday, July 13, 2026 at 11:59 pm. Any application received after the deadline will be rejected. It is the Applicant's responsibility to verify receipt of the application.

Failure to provide any of the materials requested in the application package may result in the disqualification of the Proposal.

**Public records:** Please note that all responses and information submitted in response to this BID are subject to the Massachusetts Public Records Law, M.G.L. c. 66, s. 10, and to M.G.L. c. 4, s. 7, ss. 26. Any statements in submitted responses that are inconsistent with these statutes, including marking of information as confidential, shall be disregarded. Please do not submit any information that the Applicant may not wish to disclose publicly, such as home addresses or personal telephone numbers, social security numbers, or other similar information.

#### B. DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED IF SELECTED TO RECEIVE FUNDING:

If selected, the following forms will be required to execute a contract. Applicants are encouraged to review these forms prior to submission of a BID.

- [Commonwealth Terms and Conditions](#)
- [Commonwealth W-9 Request](#) for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification
- [Contractor Authorized Signature Verification Form](#)
- [Authorization for Electronic Funds Payment](#)

If selected, the Applicant will be required to submit the following additional forms to be reimbursed:

- Reimbursement Billing Form and Project Cost Worksheet (form provided after contract has been executed)
- Copies of recorded documents (deed and/or CR)
- Copy of title certification (not title insurance)
- Copy of recent survey (recorded)
- Copies of cancelled checks from the Applicant (both sides), wire transfer statements, bank statements, or attested statement of Treasurer indicating the amount of payment, date paid, associated check or transaction numbers, and authority of payment
- CR language that ensures appropriate public access (copy)
- Photo of sign giving Conservation Partnership appropriate funding credit

- GIS Data Entry Form (provided once contract has been executed)

**C. EVALUATION PROCESS:**

A grant application review team composed of EEA staff will evaluate all applications and draft recommendations. subject to review and final approval by the Secretary of EEA.

**A site visit is required for all project applications.** EEA staff will contact you to schedule a visit to the property. Recreational opportunities identified in the application will be verified by EEA staff during the site visit.

**4. DEADLINES AND PROCUREMENT CALENDAR**

**A. RELEASE OF BID:** March 13, 2026

**B. INFORMATION SESSION:** A virtual session will be held on Wednesday, May 13, 2026 at 2:00 pm via MS Teams. Please RSVP to Darya Mattes at [darya.mattes@mass.gov](mailto:darya.mattes@mass.gov) or (617) 721-4864 no later than Tuesday, May 12, 2026 if you plan to attend the workshop. While not required, it is strongly recommended that applicants attend the workshop.

**C. APPLICATION DUE DATE: Monday, July 13, 2026 at 11:59 pm**

**D. ESTIMATED AWARD DATE:** Awards are estimated to be announced on or about 120 days after the application deadline, with contract negotiations to begin immediately thereafter. Please note this is an estimated timeframe, subject to change based on availability of funds and other factors. Applicants should not expect to close on a property in calendar year 2026.

**E. ESTIMATED CONTRACT START DATE:** Notwithstanding any verbal representations by the parties, or an earlier start date listed in the Standard Contract Form, and only after an award is issued and a final scope of services has been negotiated, the effective start date of a contract shall be the latest of the following dates: the date the Standard Contract Form has been executed by an authorized signatory of the contractor and the procuring department; the date of secretariat or other approval(s) required by law or regulation; or a later date specified in the Standard Contract Form. The estimated start date for contracts resulting from this BID is mid-January 2027, subject to change as noted above.

**5. MISCELLANEOUS**

**A. TYPE OF PROCUREMENT:** Grant

**B. USE OF THIS PROCUREMENT BY SINGLE OR MULTIPLE DEPARTMENTS:** This BID is single department procurement. All contracts awarded under this BID will be utilized solely by EEA.

**C. REQUEST FOR SINGLE OR MULTIPLE CONTRACTORS:** This BID may result in multiple contracts.

**D. BID DISTRIBUTION METHOD:** This BID has been distributed electronically using the Commbuys system. It is the responsibility of every Applicant to check Commbuys for any addenda or modifications to a BID to

which they intend to respond. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts and its subdivisions accept no liability and will provide no accommodations to Applicants who fail to check for amended BIDs and submit inadequate or incorrect responses. Potential Applicants are advised to check the “last change” field on the summary page of BIDs for which they intend to submit a response to ensure they have the most recent BID files.

**E. LIST OF ATTACHMENTS:**

- A. Application Form (to be filled out the following site: (to be filled out using the EEA [Grant Management System](#))
- B. FY 27 Conservation Partnership Grant – Response Review Rating System
- C. Policies, Statutes, Legislation Guiding this Grant Program
- D. GMS Instructions

**Attachment A**

**APPLICATION FORM**

**FY 27 CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP GRANT PROGRAM  
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs**

**SUBMIT:** Applicants are required to use the EEA [Grant Management System](#) to apply for the FY 27 Conservation Partnership grant.  
Any application received after the deadline will be rejected. It is the Applicant's responsibility to verify receipt of the application.

This version of the form is being provided as a service for applicants to see all the questions they will be required to answer through the online application.

**DEADLINE: Monday, July 13, 2026, 11:59 pm**

**A. APPLICANT INFORMATION**

Applicant Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/Town: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Contact Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Contact Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Location (street address, including municipality): \_\_\_\_\_

Type of grant request:                      Acquisition                      Due diligence for gift

Requested grant amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**B. ORGANIZATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS**

1a.) How many acres of land does your organization protect in fee ownership? \_\_\_\_\_  
Under CR? \_\_\_\_\_

1b.) For how many acres of CR land have Baseline Documentation Reports been prepared? \_\_\_\_\_

2.) Does your organization have a strategic plan, guidelines, or policies to guide land acquisition? Please describe.



**C. PARCEL INFORMATION**

Please complete a copy of this section (i.e. PARCEL INFORMATION) for each parcel that is part of this grant application.

1.) Total **Project Acreage**: \_\_\_\_\_

Total number of parcels (print off and fill out a copy of this page for each parcel): \_\_\_\_\_

2.) This **Parcel Information** form is being completed for:

A parcel or interest in a parcel to be **purchased**

Fee

CR

A parcel or interest in a parcel that will be **donated**

Fee

CR

3.) Parcel Information:

Owner(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Municipality: \_\_\_\_\_ Acres: \_\_\_\_\_

Street: \_\_\_\_\_

Assessors Sheet #: \_\_\_\_\_ Lot # \_\_\_\_\_

Are there building(s) on the parcel? Yes No

If yes, how will they be utilized (buildings should be removed unless they contribute to the conservation/recreation function of the property)? \_\_\_\_\_

4.) Are there any encroachments on this parcel? Yes No

If yes, how will they be addressed prior to the receipt of the grant award (note that all encroachments must be addressed prior to submitting the final reimbursement request to DCS)?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5.) Are there any of the following encumbrances on the parcel?

Mortgage

Easement

Lien(s)

Other (describe):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6.) **Appraisal** – **If** the proposed project involves the purchase of land or a Conservation Restriction, please check the required type of appraisal that is being submitted with this application.

Full narrative appraisal

Market analysis

Opinion of value

Appraiser or preparer: \_\_\_\_\_

Property interest valuation: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Date of appraisal, market analysis, or opinion of value: \_\_\_\_\_

*(NOTE: Appraisal, market analysis, or opinion of value can be dated **no earlier than one year prior** to the application submission deadline)*

All projects that receive funding through the Conservation Partnership Grant Program must convey a perpetual Conservation Restriction, within the meaning of sections 31 and 32 of MGL Chapter 184, to the municipality in which the project is located, a federal or state agency, or a not-for-profit corporation, or combination of these entities. In the case of a grant award for the acquisition of a CR or due diligence costs associated with a CR gift, the CR must be co-held by the Applicant and an entity eligible to hold a CR.

7.) To what public agency/agencies or organization do you intend to convey a CR or, for projects in which only the CR will be acquired, propose to co-hold the CR with?

Organization Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**D. PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

- 1.) Using the list below as a guide, please describe your project (three page maximum):
  - a. The property interest(s) to be acquired or donated
  - b. The natural characteristics and ecological value of the property
  - c. The proposed project’s ability to protect or promote sustainable working lands
  - d. The type of public recreational opportunities that will be available, and how public access will be facilitated. Please identify how recreational opportunities that provide access to people with disabilities will be incorporated.
  - e. Whether the project advances objectives in the community’s *current* Open Space and Recreation Plan (note: it is not sufficient to attach Goals and Objectives from the OSRP, some analysis is needed)
  - f. Whether the project advances objectives in the [Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan](#) (note: it is not sufficient to attach Goals and Objectives from the SCORP, some analysis is needed.)
  - g. The impact development would have on the property’s conservation and recreational value
  - h. If the project is located within a State Priority Preservation Area as shown on the [South Coast Rail Corridor Plan](#), Merrimack Valley Land Use Priority Plan, 495/MetroWest Development Compact Plan or other regional plan. See [Executive Order No. 525](#).
  - i. Whether your organization works with Native American tribes and whether they will be involved in the project
  - j. The project’s location in or near a [Burdened Area](#) and how the community has been involved in this project

2.) Attach a proposed budget that uses the budget format provided below. Also, include a timeline reflecting start and end date of steps needed to successfully complete your proposed project on or before June 30, 2027, including how any encroachments will be dealt with.

Note that while the maximum reimbursement for the project as a whole is 50% (up to \$425,000), individual project elements may be reimbursed at a higher or lower rate *as long as the balance of funding requested does not exceed 50% of the grant request.*

Expense	Total Item Cost	Grant Request	Notes
<i>Example: Fee purchase</i>	<i>\$100,000</i>	<i>\$50,000</i>	<i>If a bargain sale will be contributing ‘match value’, note</i>

<b>TOTAL PROJECT COST &amp; FUNDING REQUEST:</b>			
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<b>E. LAND PROTECTION</b>
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- 1.) How many acres would this project protect? \_\_\_\_\_ acres
- 2.) Does the proposed project abut other protected open space?
  - Abuts >25.0 acres of protected open space
  - Abuts 11.0-24.9 acres of protected open space
  - Abuts 1.0-10.9 acres of protected open space
  - Does not abut open space

\*Chapter 61, 61A, and 61B lands are not considered protected open space

<b>F. BIODIVERSITY AND NATURAL RESOURCE PROTECTION</b>
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- 1.) Does the proposed project lie within or abut mapped NHESP BioMap Core Habitat, Critical Natural Landscape, or Forest Core?
  - Lies within BioMap core habitat or critical natural landscape or abuts
  - Lies within Forest Core habitat or abuts
  - None of the above

Percentage within NHESP designated Core Habitat

- > 75.0%
- 51%-74%
- 26%-50%
- 1%-25%
- abuts

Percentage within NHESP designated Critical Natural Landscape

- > 75%
- 51%-74%
- 26%-50%
- 1%-25%
- abuts

Percentage within NHESP designated Forest Core

> 50%

1%-50%

abuts

2.) What is the average 2020 forest carbon value as identified in [TNC's Forest Carbon 2020 Map](#)?

>105 mt C / forested ac

93-105 mt C / forested ac

82-93 mt C / forested ac

73-82 mt C / forested ac

<73 mt C / forested ac

3.) What is the project location's average climate resiliency score as defined by The Nature Conservancy's [Resilient Mapping Tool](#)?

Most resilient

More resilient

Slightly more resilient

Average or median

#### **G. WORKING FARMS AND FORESTS**

1.) Is the property enrolled in Chapter 61 or 61A, or has a forest stewardship or other forest management plan been prepared for the property?

Chapter 61

Chapter 61A

Forest Stewardship or Management Plan

2). Will the project parcel conserve forested or agricultural lands?

Yes

No

If yes, describe:

#### **H. RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES**

1.) What public recreational opportunities will the project provide (explain in the project description)? Preference will be given to projects that provide opportunities for people with disabilities. *Recreational opportunities will be verified by DCS staff during the site visit.*

Trail-based activities (eg, walking, Nordic skiing, biking, horseback riding)

Water-based activities (eg, canoeing, fishing, swimming, skating)

Wilderness activities (eg, camping, hunting)

Group activities (eg, nature education, picnicking, outdoor fitness class)

2.) Will the proposed project advance priorities, goals, or objectives in the **CURRENT** local Open Space and Recreation Plan?

Yes

No

3.) Will the proposed project advance goals or objectives in the [Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan](#)?

Yes

No

4.) Will the proposed project advance a local or regional greenway plan or the [South Coast Rail Corridor Plan](#), Merrimack Valley Land Use Priority Plan, 495/MetroWest Development Compact Plan, Metro North Plan, or CMRPC Plan?

Yes

No

#### I. CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

This application was prepared by:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

I affirm that, to the best of my knowledge, the information and data contained in this application for the FY27 Conservation Partnership Grant, including attachments, are true and correct.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

#### J. ATTACHMENT CHECKLIST

Please include the following with your application:

- Attachment 1:** Project narrative
- Attachment 2:** Budget proposal, grant request, funding sources/methods, and project timeline
- Attachment 3:** USGS topographic map with parcel(s) clearly identified, as well as additional applicable maps necessary to reflect:

- Surrounding other protected open space (identify)
- NHESP BioMap designations, including Core Habitat, Critical Natural Landscape, Local Landscape, and Forest Core
- TNC Resiliency Map showing both the average 2020 forest carbon value **and** climate change resiliency
- Applicable local or regional recreation and/or preservation priorities including local/regional greenway plans or regional preservation areas shown on the State Priority Development or Preservation Areas as shown on the [South Coast Rail Corridor Plan](#), Merrimack Valley Land Use Priority Plan, or the 495/Metrowest Development Compact Plan (if applicable)
- Attachment 4:** Letter of commitment from each municipality, state agency, or land trust (or combination thereof) proposed to hold CR on purchased or gifted fee property, or to co-hold gifted CR
- Attachment 5:** Documentation of parcel enrollment in the Chapter 61 or 61A, Forest Stewardship program.
- Attachment 6:** Appraisal, market analysis, or opinion of value
- Attachment 7:** Articles of Incorporation with appropriate sections highlighted, IRS 501(c)(3) letter, and a copy of 2025 Massachusetts Annual Report as filed to the Secretary of State's office
- Attachment 8:** Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program comments: Letter from the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) indicating the presence or absence of rare and endangered species on properties included in the application. To request comments, please submit a Request for State-listed Species Information to the NHESP. See <https://www.mass.gov/how-to/request-rare-species-information> for information on submitting that request online or by mail. The request should include "Conservation Partnership Grant" in the *Project or Site Name*. There is no charge for this request letter.
- Attachment 9:** Representative photos of the site
- Attachment 10:** Latest survey of the property at time of grant submission

**The following forms will be required if selected for funding.**

- [Commonwealth Terms and Conditions](#)
- [Commonwealth W-9 Request](#) for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification
- [Contractor Authorized Signature Verification Form](#)
- [Authorization for Electronic Funds Payment](#)

## Attachment B

### FY 27 CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP GRANT - RESPONSE REVIEW RATING SYSTEM 100 TOTAL POINTS

#### I. Organizational Characteristics (16 points maximum)

- 1.) Applicant currently protects land in fee ownership and/or under CRs and has policies or procedures that guide the land acquisition process:
  - Yes = 1 pt
  - No = 0 pts
- 2.) Applicant has proven capacity to properly steward fee or CR protected lands or has experienced partner(s) that will provide needed assistance:
  - Yes = 2 pts
  - No = 0 pts
- 3.) Number of full-time equivalent (FTE) staff:
  - 0-2 FTE = 6 pts
  - 3-5 = 5 pts
  - 6-7 = 3 pts
  - 8-10 = 1 pt
- 4.) Articles of incorporation specifically state permanent land protection, land conservation, recreation as one of its missions:
  - Yes = 4 pts
  - No = 0 pts
- 5.) Organization has documents or policies that address the disposition of land and/or CRs in the event the organization can no longer steward and administer them:
  - Yes = 3 pts
  - No = 0 pts

#### II. Land Protection (15 points maximum)

- 1.) Total acreage protected (via purchase and/or donation):
  - >20 acres = 11 pts
  - 15-19 acres = 9 pts
  - 10-14 acres = 7 pts
  - 7-9 acres = 5 pts
  - 2-7 acres = 3 pts
  - <2 acres = 1 pt
- 2.) Proposed project abuts or links other protected open space:
  - Abuts >25 acres of protected open space = 4 pts
  - Abuts 11-24 acres of protected open space = 2 pts
  - Abuts 1-10 acres of protected open space = 1 pt

#### III. Biodiversity and Natural Resource Protection (25 points maximum)

- 1.) Project is within designated NHESP BioMap Core Habitat, Critical Natural Landscape, or abuts designated lands:
  - >75% is designated = 6 pts
  - 51%-75% is designated = 5 pts
  - 26%-50% is designated = 3 pts
  - 1%-25% is designated = 2 pts
  - Project abuts designated lands = 1 pt
- 2.) Project protects BioMap Forest Core, or abuts designated lands:
  - >50% is BioMap Forest Core = 5 pts
  - 1%-50% is BioMap Forest Core = 3 pts
  - Project abuts BioMap Forest Core = 1 pt
- 3.) What is the average 2020 forest carbon value as identified in [TNC's Forest Carbon 2020 Map](#)?
  - >105 mt C / forested ac = 5 pts

93-105 mt C / forested ac = 4 pts  
82-93 mt C / forested ac = 3 pts  
73-82 mt C / forested ac = 2 pts  
<73 mt C / forested ac = 1 pt

4.) How does the property rank for climate change resiliency according to [TNC's mapping score](#)?

Most resilient = 4 pts  
More resilient = 2 pts  
Slightly more resilient = 1 pts  
Average or median = 0

5.) How significantly will the subject parcel's resource value be impacted by its development (rating determined based on how this application compares to others received)?

High impact = 5 pts  
Medium impact = 3 pts  
Low impact = 1 pt

#### **IV. Working Farms and Forests (7 point maximum)**

1.) The majority of the project parcel(s) will remain (or be) enrolled in one or more of the following programs:

Chapter 61 = 2 points  
Chapter 61A = 2 points  
Forest Stewardship program = 1 point

2.) The project parcel will conserve forested or agricultural lands:

Yes = 4  
No = 0

#### **V. Recreational Opportunities (22 points maximum)**

1.) Project provides public recreational opportunities (especially those that go above and beyond to provide access for people with disabilities):

Yes (3 pts)      Marginal (2pts)      No (0pts)  
Group activities (eg, nature study, fitness classes, picnicking)  
Wilderness activities (eg, camping, hunting)  
Trail-based activities (ie, hiking, biking, walking)  
Water-based activities (eg, swimming, kayaking, fishing)

2.) Does the project serve an under-served area for outdoor recreation (rating determined by the amount of protected open space per capita and how it compares to other applications received)?

High impact = 4 pts  
Medium impact = 3 pts  
Low impact = 1 pts

3.) Project meets priorities, goals, or objectives identified in the community's Open Space and Recreation Plan

Yes = 2 pts  
No = 0

4.) Project meets priorities, goals, or objectives identified in the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

Yes = 1, 2, 3, or 4 pts  
No = 0

#### **VI. Overall Project Quality and Importance (15 points)**

1.) What is the overall quality and importance of the proposed project?

High = 8-12 pts  
Medium = 4-7 pts  
Low = 0-3 pts

2.) Is the project located in a mapped [Burdened Area](#)?

Yes = 3  
No = 0

## Attachment C

### **Policies, Statutes, Legislation Guiding this Grant Program**

#### **Chapter 209 of the Acts of 2018**

2000-7072. For grant programs for land, soil, water and natural resource conservation; open space preservation; watershed remediation; coastal resource protection, including securing access to protected coastal lands and lands to provide for the inland migration of coastal habitats; recreation; environmental equity and wildlife and endangered species protection including, but not limited to, the local acquisition for natural diversity grant program, the parkland acquisition and renovation for communities grant program, conservation partnership grant programs, including programs to support landscape-scale land conservation projects, the drinking water supply protection grant program, grant programs to assist and provide funding to conservation districts, grants to support projects and initiatives that promote carbon sequestration and climate change resiliency through sustainable forestry and salt marsh restoration, including associated educational initiatives, and grants to support local, regional and state land use planning and management capabilities to advance smart growth efforts, all pursuant to rules or regulations adopted by the secretary of energy and environmental affairs to effectuate this item; provided, that the secretary of energy and environmental affairs may provide guidance for planning, prioritization, selection and implementation of projects in furtherance of the goals of climate change mitigation and adaptation and consistent with the integrated state hazard mitigation and climate change adaptation plan; provided further, that all projects shall provide appropriate public access as determined by the secretary...

## Attachment D: EEA Grant Management System User Instructions

### To create an applicant profile:

1. Visit [Grants Management System \(GMS\) | Mass.gov](#)
2. Click on “Login to Applicant Portal”,
3. Select “Login/Register”
4. Select “Create a Business Account”
5. Follow the instructions provided.
6. For help, see EEA’s Grant Management System User Guide or Instructional Videos.

The user profile may require one or more days to receive verification. Once verified, you will receive an email notification and access to the Grant Management System for your organization. This portal will serve as your locale to view all grant information. You may then view the FY26 Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant Program funding opportunity and apply through the Grant Management System.

Applicants may save a draft application and return to modify and/or submit until the application deadline. After the deadline, applicants will not be able to edit, add files or submit materials. Please note that the “Grant Primary Contact” must be a valid system user and will receive all relevant notifications and updates to the grant record.

The online application with supporting documents must be submitted on or before Monday, July 13, 2026 at 11:59 pm. Submissions through the site will be digitally time stamped. EEA shall make no allowance for technical difficulties or inability of the respondents to utilize the online system. No applications will be accepted after the deadline for any reason.

Digital files uploaded to the application site must be provided in Microsoft Office compatible format or unlocked Adobe Acrobat.

### A few tips:

- Filter and sort programs by Program Name or Agency to navigate to EEA’s FY26 Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant Program.
- To start an application, click the “Apply” button to enter the application form for the grant program.
- The “Summary” tab will show the general grant program information. The “Policies and Procedures” tab will show the program procedures, custom application questions, and required documentation.

- Click on the “Start Grant Application” button on the top right to enter the grant application form.
- In the “Upload Documentation” section, download, complete, and re-upload the required Scope and Budget template. Upload any supporting documentation or materials within the Additional Documentation upload tool. Please refer to the Application Checklist (Attachment L) for a list of forms that may need to be uploaded to complete your application.
- Once complete, submit your grant application. No additional project information or documentation changes can be made after submitting.