



**Division of Conservation
Services**

**FY26 Land
Conservation
Assistance Grant
Program Workshop**

January 21, 2026

About the Land Conservation Assistance Grant

Program goal: to bolster staff capacity and resources for municipalities and organizations seeking to protect land and develop parks.

- New last year; a few changes for FY26
- Cap of \$60,000 per applicant per fiscal year
- Rolling application deadline (through 4/30/26) and rolling awards
- All grant-funded activities must be completed by June 30, 2026 OR June 30, 2027.

New for FY26

- Applicant must be the entity undertaking the project.
- Staff time is no longer an eligible expense.
- Projects may now span two fiscal years.



Eligible Projects

- a) Assistance **preparing a grant application** for land conservation, acquisition of land for eligible outdoor recreation projects, or park development/renovation. These may be DCS grants **or** other municipal, state, federal, or private grant programs.
- b) Complete some or all of the **steps* involved in land transactions** for the acquisition of a fee interest in land or a CR, Watershed Protection Restriction (WPR), or Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR).
- c) Prepare or update a municipal **Open Space and Recreation Plan**.

**Examples on the next slide...*

Examples of “steps involved in land transactions”

Due diligence costs

- Appraisals
- Title examination
- Environmental site assessments
- Surveys
- Legal fees associated with the acquisition

Consultant services to assist with negotiation, drafting, or recording of real estate transaction agreements:

- CR or Deed drafting
- Baseline Document Report preparation work



Ineligible expenses

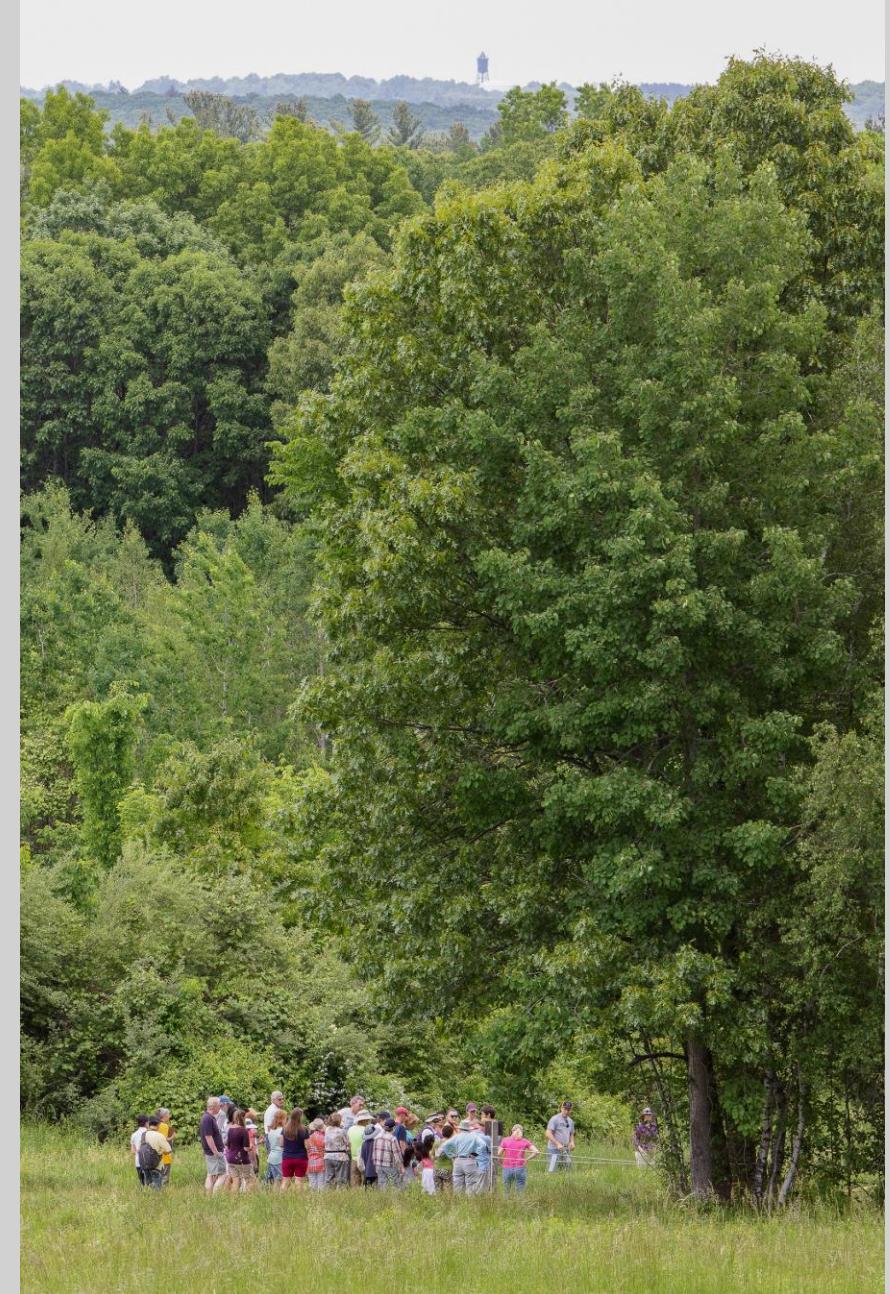
- Property acquisition
- Applicant staff salaries
- Trail construction
- Signage
- Stewardship or monitoring endowments
- Equipment or goods

Some of these *are* eligible under other DCS programs.

This is not a comprehensive list! – ask if you have questions.

Eligible Applicants

- Municipalities
- Land trusts
- Tribal governments
- Conservation districts
- Water or fire districts and other public water suppliers



Match requirement and maximum awards

Reimburses **up to 90%** of project expenses up to:

- \$5,000 for grant writing/preparation; \$5,000 for appraisal (if applicable)
- \$50,000 for other eligible services
- \$25,000 for Open Space and Recreation Plan assistance

May seek funding for multiple projects or services, however, **the maximum award is \$60,000 per applicant.**

Application requirements

- Application form (completed in the online Grants Management System)
- Project budget (use the provided template!)
- Cost estimates/quotes
- Site map (for site-based projects; not required for OSRPs)
- Authorization letter from applicant CEO

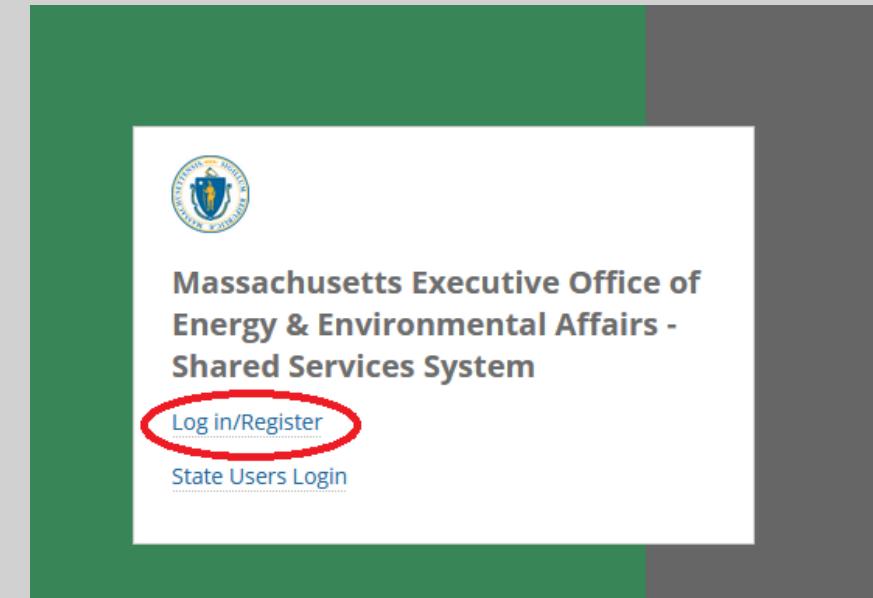
A	B	C	D	E	F
1	Land Conservation Assistance Grant Budget FY26-FY27				
2					
3	Organization Name				
4	Project Name				
5	<i>Instructions: For tasks spanning both fiscal years, please list the task twice with the costs broken out for FY26 and FY27. Total match should equal at least 10% of the project budget. Match may include in-kind costs such as staff time. Fields in rows 20-24 will auto-populate; please only fill out the blue-shaded fields below.</i>				
6					
7					
8	Task name	Fiscal Year	Total Cost	Grant Amount	Match Amount
9					
10					
11					
12					
13					
14					
15					
16					
17					
18					
19					
20	Total		0	0	0
21	% Match		#DIV/0!		
22					
23	Total FY 26 Grant Request		0		
24	Total FY 27 Grant Request		0		
25					

New Grants Management System (GMS)

- Centralizes grants management in one place. Applications are submitted, reviewed, and managed through this system.
- Will soon be used for all EEA grant programs (applicants can browse all grant opportunities).
- Requires that each applicant create an account, which can have multiple users.
- RPAs and consultants may still assist with creating application materials, but the **application must be submitted by a person directly affiliated with the applicant** (staff, board/commission member, etc)

New Grants Management System (GMS): getting started

- Sign up for GMS: Visit [Grants Management System \(GMS\) | Mass.gov](https://mass.gov/gms) for instructions
- Watch our instructional playlist on YouTube:
https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLzQVK6KiTOqyPW5PUOcFE42iRJgdm8LA_&si=Wm2l78OgFDZ-1nA_
- See our user guide at the GMS Portal: [Help - Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs Grants Management System](https://mass.gov/gms)



Evaluation Criteria

- **This is a non-competitive grant;** all eligible and approved applications will receive funding.
- Funds will be awarded **on a rolling basis**, as funds remain available.
- If only a portion of listed costs are eligible, EEA may award partial funding.

**Applications will be accepted
through April 30, 2026**



A wide-angle photograph of a river scene during autumn. The water is dark and reflects the surrounding trees. In the center, a red canoe with two people is moving towards the left. Behind it, several other kayakers and canoers are scattered across the river. The banks are covered with trees showing vibrant orange, yellow, and green leaves. Fallen branches and logs are visible in the water, particularly on the left side.

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[www.mass.gov/how-to/apply-to-the-land-conservation-
assistance-grant-program](http://www.mass.gov/how-to/apply-to-the-land-conservation-assistance-grant-program)