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

Project # FY27LAND0005
Posting Date: October 26, 2026

Landscape Partnership Grant
FY 2027

BID#: BD-27-1042-ENV-ENV01-134823

1. Grant Opportunity:

A. OVERVIEW AND GOALS: In furtherance of the Healey Administration's environmental, economic, and climate change resiliency goals, the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) protects, conserves, and restores the biodiversity and natural resources of the Commonwealth. To fulfill this mission, Rebecca Tepper, Secretary of EEA, is making available funding for the FY 2027 Landscape Partnership Grant Program to assist the acquisition of property interests in large, unfragmented conservation and working landscapes, by two or more entities acting in cooperation.

This program advances the large-scale connectivity of conservation lands that is necessary to sustain the integrity and resilience of ecosystems and the viability of local farm and forest economies. Its purpose is to facilitate complex large-acreage projects, leverage state financial investments, expand partnerships among federal, state, municipal, and non-profit entities, enhance the stewardship of conservation land, and expand public outdoor recreational opportunities. The program provides funding to assist collaborations among municipal, state, federal, and non-profit partners in acquiring interests in lands suitable for conservation purposes, including undeveloped lands, farms and forests, water supply lands, unique ecosystems, rare species habitats, and restored lands. The grant is intended to enable projects that stretch beyond the scope of other state land grant programs. The Landscape Partnership Grant Program also supports Governor Healey's climate and clean energy goals by accelerating land conservation, including investing in forest conservation to achieve important natural climate solutions.

B. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS: Applications must reflect participation of partners from a minimum of two of the following categories:

1) Municipalities acting through their conservation commission, agricultural commissions or municipal departments managing water supply land, or another political body established for the purpose of acquiring and managing land and interests for conservation purposes and public benefit.

   The award of grant funds to a municipal partner is contingent upon the municipal grantee being able to certify that it will comply with the Massachusetts General Laws, including G.L. c. 40A, § 3A, the MBTA Communities Act. Compliance with the MBTA Communities Act is determined by the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities. Eligible municipalities must not have unresolved protected open space conversion issues with EEA. For details, review the EEA Article 97 Disposition Policy;

2) Water or fire districts or other non-profit, non-municipal public water suppliers;

3) Non-profit 501(c)(3) organizations that have been formed for purposes of land conservation and stewardship;

4) State or federal environmental land agencies including the Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game (MassWildlife), Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR), and Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). Federal agencies within the US Department of the Interior (USDOI) or US Department of Agriculture (USDA) are eligible partners but may not receive funding through this program.

5) Massachusetts-based federally recognized tribes, state-recognized tribes, or other Massachusetts tribal governments.

At least two of the partners in an application must acquire fee or CR interests through the project.

C. ELIGIBLE PROJECTS: Applications will be accepted for projects to be completed in FY 2027, 2028 and/or 2029 and may include any combination of the following acquisitions:

1. Land in fee simple for open space, passive recreation, forestry, agriculture or water supply;
2. A perpetual Conservation Restriction (CR), Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) or Watershed Preservation Restriction (WPR);

Acreage Requirements:

The Project must achieve permanent protection for a minimum contiguous acreage based on County as follows:

County/ies	Minimum Acreage
Berkshire, Franklin, Worcester	500 acres
Hampden	300 acres
Bristol, Hampshire, Plymouth	250 acres
Essex	200 acres
Barnstable, Dukes, Middlesex, Nantucket, Norfolk, Suffolk	100 acres

Projects that span multiple Counties must meet the average of the minimum thresholds for those Counties.

Proposed project core lands, whether purchased or a gift, must be contiguous, or connected through other permanently protected land, including land held by 501c(3) non-profit land trusts, or land that is currently or will be effectively reconnected by the construction of a wildlife passage structure as part of, or concurrent with, the acquisition project. Fee acquisition of inholdings may count towards acreage only if it can be demonstrated that the acquisition of the parcel will achieve a significant overall benefit such as improved property management and/or stewardship.

Roads: It is strongly preferred that project parcels not be separated by roads. However, parcels on either side of small, minimally-traveled roads (not more than two lanes of travel) may be counted toward the required acreage subject to EEA's evaluation. Projects may include parcels on both sides of a major road or highway as part of the minimum project acreage **only** if the parcels are connected

by, or the project includes the installation of, a suitable wildlife passage structure(s) that facilitates movement of wildlife.

Parcels with existing rights-of-way for infrastructure or development held by private third parties, may be included at EEAs discretion, but applicants may be required to extinguish these rights prior to project completion.

Water: Waterbodies, streams and rivers do not constitute a break between project parcels. Small and unprotected water bodies (typically less than 10 acres) may be included in the total project acreage. However, land area under a Great Pond (10 acres or larger historically), or a larger body of water, may **not** count towards the minimum 500 acres; however, they can serve to connect other eligible parcels.

Additional parcels: Parcels separated by developed or unprotected parcels that are not proposed to be included in the project do not count towards the minimum acreage eligibility. However, these parcels may be included as additional acreage, and may contribute favorably to its evaluation. Applicants must demonstrate that these additional parcels play a role in achieving the benefits of the project.

Funding for protection of these additional parcels, or the eligibility of the gift or bargain sale of such parcels as project "match" is at EEA's discretion. EEA may ask that the value of any gift or bargain-sale of parcels deemed by EEA to be extraneous to the core landscape in a proposed budget be replaced with alternative sources of project match.

Conservation Restriction Requirements

Fee simple acquisitions by 501c(3) non-profits must be encumbered by a CR conveyed to a qualified entity unless a waiver for this requirement is granted by EEA.

Public Access Requirements

Some form of accommodation for public access is required of all projects and is encouraged on all, or a majority of, parcels particularly parcels acquired in fee. Public access on privately held parcels for which funding is sought to acquire a CR, APR, or WPR is encouraged and strongly preferred, but not required. Public access, where provided, must be permanent and by right although reasonable restrictions on the time, place, and nature of public use are allowed.

Grant recipients must identify permitted and prohibited uses for property acquired in fee, and post this in signage and incorporate in a management plan, appropriately. Proposed uses that threaten natural resource values, agricultural uses, or drinking water supply are prohibited by EEA.

Examples of permitted uses: *hiking, biking, swimming in a natural waterbody, hunting, fishing, cross-country skiing, wildlife viewing, environmental education, community gardens, timber management with approved plan, agriculture, camping.*

Examples of prohibited uses: *athletic fields (baseball, soccer, etc.), pools, play structures, municipal-scale wells, golf courses, solar and wind installations, municipal offices or buildings, motorized recreational vehicles (possible exceptions made for pre-existing, established snowmobile trails), dog parks, encroaching private uses.*

Parcel Eligibility Requirements

Land that is already protected for any purpose under Article 97 or under an EEA-approved CR, an APR or WPR is ineligible for funding. Article 97 status is conferred to a property purchased with an EEA grant program (LAND, PARC, Conservation Partnership, or LWCF) or by its acquisition by a government entity for

any Article 97 purpose. Municipally-owned land that is not Article 97, or with unclear or disputed Article 97 status may, at the discretion of EEA, be included in a project to secure Article 97 status. Applicants must justify the inclusion of any such parcel.

Land enrolled in Chapter 61, 61A or 61B are not classified as permanently protected land and are eligible to receive funding.

Land already owned by a project partner, or other municipality, an EEA agency (e.g., DCR, DFG), or federal environmental land protection agency as well as lands already be owned by a 501(c)(3) non-profit environmental or conservation organization or other conservation entity is ineligible *unless it was purchased by the non-profit or conservation organization no earlier than one year prior to the posting date of this bid document and can be demonstrated the property was purchased with the sole intention of pre-acquiring the land on behalf of another partner* to accommodate a potential Landscape Partnership grant award. Any exercise of this exemption is at the risk of the non-profit organization. EEA does not guarantee funding as a result of this exemption.

Parcels cannot be located in an Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development- designated Priority Development Area (PDA) as shown in the South Coast Rail Corridor Plan, I-495/MetroWest Development Compact Plan, Merrimack Valley Land Use Priority Plan, Metro North Land Use Priority Plan, Central Massachusetts Land Use Priority Plan, or other regional plan available**.**

Structures
Grantee must remove all structures in advance of seeking reimbursement unless the structure directly supports conservation or passive public recreation and it is documented they will continue to serve that purpose in the management plan, recorded CR or Baseline Document Report.

Match eligibility
Gifts of property intended to serve as project match may be acquired prior to an executed contract, but not earlier than the posting date of the Landscape Partnership bid if the property is proposed match for FY27. Gifts of property intended to serve as project match proposed for FY28 may not be completed earlier than July 1, 2027, and gifts of property intended to serve as project match for FY29 may not be completed earlier than July 1, 2028 to remain eligible in the corresponding year.

D. APPLICATION DEADLINE: Thursday, March 11, 2027

E. INFORMATION SESSION: An information session will be held virtually on Thursday, December 3 at 1:00 pm. Please email Vanessa Farny at vanessa.farny@mass.gov by Tuesday, December 1 to receive a link to the meeting. While not required, it is strongly recommended that applicants attend the session.

F. FUNDING AVAILABILITY: This grant reimburses up to 50% of eligible project costs for a maximum grant award of $1,250,000 unless increased at the discretion of the Secretary**.** Eligible project costs include the value of any gifts or bargain sales that partners may secure as 'match'.

For multi-year projects, funding requests within the first fiscal year of the award cannot exceed 50% of the total requested.

Eligible project costs include all EEA-approved costs incurred within the grant recipients contract or ISA period, including:

- Purchase of property interests (Note: buildings on parcels acquired in fee that do not support conservation or passive public recreation, must be removed in advance of seeking reimbursement.)

- Survey work
- Title search and certification
- Recording fees
- Forest Management Plan
- Baseline Documentation Report preparation work
- Appraisals (only if completed within the contract period)

Ineligible project costs include, but are not limited to:

- Legal fees (except those incurred with title research, certification, or closing)
- Appraisal(s) conducted outside the contract period
- Application preparation and submission costs
- Stewardship endowments
- Staff salaries
- Equipment or goods
- Any other items as determined by EEA

Applicants selected to receive funding may not use other state grant funding for eligible project costs. Funding contributed by a state agency participating as a project partner or CPA funds are permitted.

Awards may result in a single or multiple contracts for each project. Municipal and non-profit project partners with executed contracts will be reimbursed for eligible expenditures incurred by the contracted grantee within the contract period as documented by invoices and cancelled check or wire transfer statements or an attested treasurer's statement. Grant funding for EEA agencies will be via a capital allocation or Inter-Agency Service Agreement (ISA). Federal USDA or USDOI agencies are eligible project partners, and may contribute financial, stewardship, ownership, or facilitative resources, but are ineligible to receive grant funding.

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, contracted partners will be notified in writing and the 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, in writing, if additional funding is received. In the absence of foreseeable available funding, EEA may terminate the contract.

G. Regulations, Statutes, or Authorization Governing this Grant Program: This bid is issued according to the following authorizations: Chapter 312 of the Acts of 2008, Chapter 286 of the Acts of 2014, Chapter 209 of the Acts of 2018 and Chapter 268 of the Acts of 2022. All properties receiving funding through this program will become permanently protected open space under Article 97 of the Amendments to the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, dedicated to conservation use in accordance with M.G.L. c. 40, §8C, or agricultural use under M.G.L. c. 40, §8L and Chapter 780 of the Acts of 1977, or conservation under c. 286, §2 of the Acts of 2014. All projects for which grant assistance is provided must be open to the general public on at least a portion of the project, for appropriate passive recreational use. For land under a state environmental land agency, the public access policy of the relevant agency will be followed. See program policies and regulations in Attachment F.

H. Contact Information:

Vanessa Farny
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
100 Cambridge St. – Suite 900
Boston, MA 02114
vanessa.farny@mass.gov

2. Application Submission

A. INSTRUCTIONS: Applications must be submitted through the EEA Grant Management System by **March 11, 2027.** EEA shall make no allowance for technical difficulties or inability of the respondents to utilize the online system. Applications will not be accepted after the deadline.

Applicants are required to establish a user profile on the system to apply. Please allow a few days to establish and verify your profile and navigate the new Grant Management System.

To create an applicant profile:

Click on "Login to Applicant Portal"
Select "Login/Register"
Select "Create a Business Account"
Follow the instructions provided
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 Landscape Partnership Grant Program funding opportunity and apply.

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 system user submitting the grant will be the default "Grant Primary Contact" and will receive all relevant notifications and updates to the grant record.

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 the Landscape Partnership 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 then upload the required documents using the templates provided. Upload additional supporting documentation or materials within the Additional Documentation upload tool. Please refer to the Required Documents below for materials that you may need to complete your application.
- Once complete, submit your grant application.

B. REQUIRED DOCUMENTS: A complete application package includes:

1. Appraisal report(s). For FY27 acquisitions appraisals are required to be submitted with the application, for FY28 or FY29 acquisitions we encourage appraisals be submitted with the application, but will accept on or before the deadlines identified in Section 2C;
2. Project narrative;
3. Letters of Authorization for each project partner. Letters must confirm the project manager is authorized

to submit application materials on behalf of the named partner and affirm the total project costs and total funding requested by the partner. The letter must be signed by the appropriate signatory for the partner (e.g. Chief Executive Officer; Chair of selectboard, Mayor, or City/Town Administrator or Manager), and

4. Draft municipal (Town Meeting or City Council) vote(s) that authorize municipal partners to acquire property for conservation and passive recreation and to expend the total project costs. Draft language must be approved by the grant manager. Please identify the date the vote is anticipated in your application.
5. Maps illustrating project parcels, protection status of connecting/adjacent parcels, habitat values and other relevant resources and features, including water ways, ponds or lakes, as well as roads;
6. Letter from 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 "Landscape Partnership Grant" in the Project or Site Name. There is no charge for this request letter.
7. Letter from Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) indicating the presence/absence of historic or archaeological sites. Submit a Project Notification Form to MHC; and,
8. Documentation of good stewardship on conservation properties currently owned or managed by project partners.
9. Additional documentation to support application and/or project narrative (e.g., evidence of enrollment in Ch. 61/61A; forest management plan; documentation of planned public drinking water source; etc.)

C. APPRAISAL REPORTS: An appraisal is required for the property value proposed for acquisition (e.g. fee or CR) **by the deadline identified** for all acquisitions included in the project, including gifts of land or bargain sales proposed as 'match' parcels. The applicant or one of the project partners must be the client for the appraisal.

Appraisals may not be more than one year old at the time of submission. All appraisal reports must be prepared by contracted real estate appraisers, certified or licensed and in good standing pursuant to M.G.L. c. 112 and regulations promulgated by the Board of Registration of Real Estate Appraisers. See the DCS website for the EEA Specifications for Analytical Narrative Appraisal Reports.

Appraisals should exclude building value; the purchase or valuation of structures is not eligible for grant funding and should be excluded from the project unless proposed to serve a specific conservation or recreational purpose compatible with the conservation goals.

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.

Appraisal deadlines:
For property to be purchased or gifted in **FY27 (before June 30, 2027)**, appraisals must be submitted with the application.

For property to be purchased or gifted in **FY28 (between July 1, 2027 and June 30, 2028)**, appraisals must be submitted not later than May 1, 2027.

For property to be purchased or gifted in **FY29 (between July 1, 2028 and June 30, 2029)**, appraisals must be submitted not later than January 31, 2028.

A deadline extension for required appraisal(s) is at EEA's discretion.

D. BUDGET REQUIREMENT: A detailed project budget is required. EEA may approve or disapprove individual costs in a proposed budget.

Grant requests reflected in the budget should not be for more than 50% of total eligible project costs up to a maximum of $1,250,000. Requests may include up to 100% of an individual eligible cost, provided the **sum** of requested funding does not exceed 50% of total documented project costs. For two-year grant requests, the total request in the first year may not exceed 50% of the grant award.

Municipal and non-profit partners must secure authorization to raise, borrow, or otherwise appropriate 100% of respective project costs in anticipation of a grant reimbursement payment.

Eligible sources of project match funding may include, but are not limited to:

- Foundation grants
- Municipal land, open space, CPA, or agricultural accounts
- Private donations
- Federal agency funds, grants, or loans
- Natural resources damages settlement funds
- Non-profit accounts
- State agency funds (allocations outside of this grant)
- Drinking water protection accounts
- Gifts of property interests, including gifts of partial value via bargain sales
- Other non-state funds approved by EEA

E. APPLICATION STEPS AND PROJECT COMPLETION:

1. Lead partner submits **online application**.
2. DCS arranges **in-person site visits**.
3. **EEA evaluates applications** using Landscape Partnership Grant Program selection criteria. See Attachment B for detail.
4. **Awards are announced,** and grant recipients receive a formal award letter. Applicants not selected to receive funding will receive a brief explanation and recommendations for improving future grant program applications.
5. **Contracts issued to project partners** are signed by project partners and executed by EEA.
6. **Municipal partners secure funding authorization (if not already secured)** via vote to authorize the municipality to appropriate, transfer from available funds, expend from its Conservation Fund, or borrow a sufficient amount to meet its contribution obligations as required. A municipality may vote to borrow funds in anticipation of state or federal reimbursement prior to receiving a grant award (M.G.L. C. 44, §8C)] (b) designate the Conservation Commission to hold and manage the property for conservation and passive recreation (M.G.L. C. 40, §8c) or public water supplier to hold and manage the property for drinking water supply protection (M.G.L. c. 40, §39A). Language must be reviewed and approved by the Landscape Partnership grant program manager prior to the vote.
7. Parcels that involve a CR held by a municipality or non-profit partner must **have the draft CR reviewed by DCS**. Draft CRs should be submitted **4 months prior to anticipated closing.** See instructions on the DCS website.
8. **Complete due diligence** to ensure all properties have clear title and an accurate metes and bounds survey.
9. Municipal and state agency grant recipients must **follow state procurement law**, M.G.L. C. 30B (Uniform Procurement Act). Municipal acquisition projects fall under Section 16(2)(e), including a requirement for advertising in the Central Register 30 days prior to closing. **Communities using CPA funds for the acquisition are exempt from this requirement.**
10. **Purchase properties** and record all required documents.
11. **Prepare properties acquired in fee for public use** including any site cleanup necessary, and to ensure parking and public access are adequate. A sign(s) acknowledging Landscape Partnership Grant Program funding is installed at main entry point(s). Partners may use their organizations traditional sign formats.

12. **Submit a Baseline Documentation Report, Land Management Plan or other Stewardship Plan accepted by EEA** with detail of property conditions at the time of award.
13. Partners coordinate with lead partner to **request reimbursements** and ensure project documentation is complete and submitted by the deadline.
14. **Reimbursement payments are made** by electronic funds transfer.

F. DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED IF SELECTED TO RECEIVE FUNDING: If an application is selected to receive funding, each non-state project partner seeking funding will be required to submit the following forms to complete a contract:

- Commonwealth Standard Contract with Commonwealth Scope and Budget Form;
- Completed Contractor Authorized Signatory Listing; and

Respondents should review the Commonwealth Standard Contract Form, Commonwealth Scope and Budget Form, and Contractor Authorized Signatory Listing prior to submission of a Response, available under the Forms and Terms tab of this COMMBUYS posting, as well as: https://www.mass.gov/lists/osd-forms. If awarded funds under this bid, the awardee shall have 90 days from the public announcement of the award to execute a contract with EEA.

3. Evaluation and Project Terms

A. APPLICATION REVIEW: Each application will be scored using the criteria below. See Attachment B for more details.

- **Local involvement and stewardship capacity of applicants**
- **Project quality and consistency with program priorities**

A grant application review team composed of EEA staff members will review all applications, conduct site visits and develop funding recommendations.

B. CONTRACT TERMS & CONDITIONS: Awarded projects must abide by the Standard Commonwealth of Massachusetts Terms and Conditions, and/or an Interdepartmental Service Agreement. All contracts are subject to successful negotiation of a Final Scope of Services. EEA does not guarantee that any contracts may result from this bid. If awarded funds under this bid, the awardee shall have 90 days from the public announcement of the award to execute a contract with EEA. It is anticipated that projects could commence when the relevant contract or ISA is executed, or capital allocation completed. Amendment to contracts is at the sole discretion of EEA.

C. ANTICIPATED DURATION OF CONTRACT(S): The contract period will begin on the date of contract execution or a specified later date. Multiple contracts may be awarded under a single application, to multiple project partners, upon determination of the review committee. Contracts issued pursuant to this bid must expend 100% of costs associated with the approved project on or before the end of fiscal year (FY) 27 (June 30, 2027), FY 28 (June 30, 2028) or FY 29 (June 30, 2029) per contract terms. Amendment or extension of a contract is at the sole discretion of EEA.

D. DELIVERABLES, OWNERSHIP, AND CREDIT DUE: Acquisitions resulting from this bid are subject to various requirements depending upon the Grantee. All projects must be authorized and adhere to regulatory, statutory, or charter requirements of the partner and/or funding source.

Acquisitions by municipalities for purposes other than water supply protection must be held by the Conservation Commission or Agricultural Commission as appropriate.

Acquisitions for water supply protection by a municipal water commission or other public water supplier, including water districts or fire districts, must be authorized by the Board of Water Commissioners or Board of Selectmen authorized as such, and may require DEP approval.

If Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds are used to acquire project lands, adherence to CPA regulations is required, including the conveyance of a CR to an appropriate 501(c)(3) organization within the meaning of M.G.L. c. 184.

Fee simple acquisitions by 501(c)(3) non-profits must be encumbered by a CR.

APRs must adhere to current Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources' criteria for participation in the APR program.

Property interests acquired with this grant program will become protected open space under Article 97 of the Amendments to the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. No major alteration or change in use of properties may take place after the property is acquired. EEA Project Agreements affirming that property acquired as part of the grant-funded project is protected under Article 97 must be recorded with deed for all municipal fee acquisitions.

E. REPORTING: Grant recipients will be required to submit periodic progress reports and demonstrate progress towards proposed acquisitions of property interests as follows:

- For property to be acquired with **FY28** funding: A purchase and sale agreement must be executed and all due diligence completed not later than April 1, 2028. All recorded documents and due diligence should be completed by June 1, 2028.
- For property to be acquired with **FY29** funding: A purchase and sale agreement must be executed and all due diligence completed not later than April 1, 2029. All recorded documents and due diligence should be completed by June 1, 2028.

Projects that fail to meet these deadlines may have their funding commitment withdrawn. Extensions are at the discretion of EEA.

F. INVOICING: The Landscape Partnership Grant Program is a reimbursement program. Award recipients must submit a billing form with proof of payment for all project costs for which reimbursement is sought. Only approved expenses incurred by the contracted entity during the period of contract, and for which appropriate documentation is submitted, are eligible for reimbursement. EEA may consider requests to provide funds for property interest purchase costs to be held in escrow in anticipation of closing. However, these funds are not guaranteed, and applicants should ensure they have authorization to spend the full project cost to remain eligible for reimbursement.

4. Procurement Calendar

A. RELEASE OF BID: October 26, 2026

B. INFORMATION SESSION: An information session will be held virtually via MS Teams at December 3, 2026. Please be sure to register in advance by emailing Vanessa Farny at vanessa.farny@mass.gov to receive a link to the meeting. While not required, it is strongly recommended that applicants attend the workshop.

C. APPLICATION DEADLINE: March 11, 2027

D. ESTIMATED AWARD DATE: Awards will be announced as soon as is feasible after the grant application deadline. Contract negotiations will begin immediately thereafter.

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.

5. Miscellaneous

A. TYPE OF PROCUREMENT: Grant

B. USE OF THIS PROCUREMENT BY SINGLE OR MULTIPLE DEPARTMENTS: This bid is a single department procurement.

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. The application and answers to questions will be posted on COMMBUYS and the DCS website.
Applicants may not alter bid language or any bid component files. Those submitting a proposal must respond in accordance with the bid directions and complete only those sections that prompt an applicant for a response. Modifications to the body of this bid, specifications, terms and conditions, or which change the intent of this bid are prohibited. Any unauthorized alterations will disqualify response.

E. LIST OF ATTACHMENTS TO THIS BID:

A. Application form
B. Landscape Partnership Grant Program selection system
C. Requirements for use of Community Preservation Act funds in municipal acquisitions
D. Sample municipal vote
E. Landscape Partnership program policies and legislation

Landscape Partnership Grant Program
APPLICATION FORM
Deadline: March 11, 2027

Application must be completed online at: https://greenhub.appianportals.com/applicants-portal

1. PROJECT INFORMATION

Project name: _____

Project partners & contact information

This application must be submitted by the project contact for the Lead Partner. ***All projects must have at least two project partners representing at least two of the following categories:*** municipal conservation commissions, water commissions or water departments; non-profit public water suppliers; non-profit 501(c)(3) organizations whose primary purpose includes land conservation, environmental protection, environmental education, or outdoor recreation; government land agencies, including the DCR, MDAR, MassWildlife, MassDOT or US Department of the Interior (USDOI) or US Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Which organization, municipal or government agency partner is serving as the Project Lead?

_____

The individual submitting this application will serve as the point of contact for this application and will be responsible for ensuring ***all*** *project partners complete their obligations.*

Please identify partner 2: _____
Authorized Project Manager for Partner 2:
Email Contact:

[Optional] Partner 3: _____
Authorized Project Manager for Partner 3:
Email Contact:

[Optional] Partner 4: _____
Authorized Project Manager for Partner 4:
Email Contact:

[Optional] Partner 5: _____
Authorized Project Manager for Partner 5:
Email Contact:

2. PROJECT DETAILS

Projects must include the minimum contiguous acreage required, as identified in the table in Section 2B and described therein. Additional parcels may be included.

What is the project total acreage? _____
How many project parcels*? _____
* Parcels under the same ownership, and intended for conveyance to the same partner, or for protection under the same restriction (ie. one deed or CR), maybe considered a single 'parcel'.

Project municipality/ies and county/ies

_____

In which of the following Fiscal Years is funding requested? Please ensure the budget submitted clearly identifies the parcels proposed for acquisition in each fiscal year):

FY 2027 $_____ FY 2028 $_____ FY 2029 $_____

What is the total acreage of permanently protected open space that is adjacent or otherwise connected to the parcels proposed for acquisition? _____ acres
Maps attached with this application should clearly identify this acreage and the conservation status of these parcels.

Project description
Provide a 2-3 page narrative description of your project that will assist the evaluation of the overall scope and quality of the proposed project. Please include the following:

- Role of each project partner (e.g. parcels that will be acquired, stewardship responsibilities);
- How conservation of the parcels benefits the ecological function and natural resources of the region, and/or has any impact upon the success of further conservation efforts;
- If any proposed project parcels are not directly adjacent, or well-connected by adjacent protected parcels, how the acquisition of the parcels contribute to project goals;
- A project timeline including anticipated closing dates for all properties and the schedule for completing due diligence, survey work (as applicable);
- Community benefits the project will provide (e.g. drinking water supply protection, flood mitigation, recreational access and/or trail linkages);
- Location of current or future public access. Identify any current recreational uses that will benefit from the property acquisition;
- The risk of development;
- Any quantifiable economic benefits that will be achieved for the local economy;
- Whether this project incorporates any specific Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program goals for the communities involved;
- Proposed future stewardship.

Parcel Information
Complete the following table. For project parcels with property interests with both fee and CR interests conveyed, use a separate line to identify the partner and acquired interest. [Use an Excel spreadsheet if preferred.]

Assessor parcels under the same land ownership within the same municipality that have been appraised jointly as a single property may be counted together under a single "parcel" number if they are being acquired by the same project partner for cohesive management (e.g. a larger parcel subject to a subdivision that has been divided into numerous smaller house lots on assessors plan).

Parcel #	Assessor's map/lot/parcel	Municipality	Address (if available)	Landowner (as named on deed)	Acreage	Project partner	Interest (Fee/ CR)	Appraised Value	Appraisal Date
1									
2									
3									
4									
5									
6									
7									
Insert additional rows to accommodate parcels, as needed.									

Has title research been performed? __Yes __No

Is eminent domain is anticipated for any parcels? Has the pro-tanto award amount been determined?

*Certified clear title is a condition of reimbursement. If clear title is not available, an acquisition by friendly taking

(eminent domain) process may be used to acquire title. Applicants are advised to conduct title research well in advance of anticipated closing date, as title problems can complicate and delay acquisition.

Is any of the proposed project acreage under a negotiated agreement with the landowner (e.g. Purchase and Sale Agreement, or signed option agreement)? __Yes __No

If so, identify the parcel(s), the agreement(s) in place.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

For municipal acquisitions:
Do you have town meeting vote/city council approval? ❑ Yes ❑ No
If not, what is the date for the vote? _____
Note: Project must have municipal authorization prior to May 31, 2027 to receive reimbursement for FY27 awards, by December 31, 2027 for FY 28 and FY29 awards.

Parcel Use Details

Identify parcels in the same order as the Parcel Information table above. Please include parcel numbers in a map(s) so they may clearly be identified.

Parcel #	Assessor map/lot/parcel	Is there a metes/bounds boundary survey? (Y/N)	What is the current property use?	Is the parcel enrolled in Chapter 61 or 61A? (Y/N)	Are agricultural or forestry uses proposed? (Identify use)	Are there structures on the parcel? (Y/N)	Will public access be allowed? (Y/N)
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							
7							

Insert additional rows to accommodate parcels, as needed.

Describe where public access is proposed. If public access is proposed for parcels **without** frontage, describe how the public will access the property, including whether existing rights of access or long-term agreements exist and/or whether there are plans to secure access necessary for public access to these properties.

_____

_____

If structures are located on parcels, identify the parcel, the structure(s), and current and planned use. (Note: Appraisals should explicitly exclude building value, as the purchase of structures are not eligible for grant funding; buildings on parcels acquired in fee that do not support conservation or passive public recreation, must be removed in advance of seeking reimbursement. CRs should exclude residential structures.)

_____

_____

_____

_____

Are any parcels within a designated Priority Development Area (PDA) **or** a Priority Preservation Area (PPA) located in any of the following areas designated by the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities: South Coast Rail Corridor Plan, the I-495/MetroWest Development Compact Plan, Merrimack Valley Land Use Priority Plan? ❑ Yes ❑ No

If yes, identify the designation and plan:

_____

_____

3. PROJECT QUALITY

Biodiversity and resource protection:

What percentage of the project is within MA Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) BioMap **Core Habitat and/or Critical Natural Landscape**? -
_____ %

The Nature Conservancy's Resilient Land map assigns an average climate resiliency score to identify the importance of the site for climate change adaptation, what is the aggregate resiliency score for the project?
_____ SD

Water resources:

How many acres are located within 400 feet of the ocean, a lake, pond, river, stream, or wetland?
_____ acres

What percentage of the project is located within:

A Zone I or II, Zone A or B drinking water supply area? _____ %
An Interim Wellhead Protection Area? _____ %
A sole-source, medium-, or high-yield aquifer? _____ %

Please make sure to include a map that reflects the designation(s) in MA GIS data.

If the project includes forest anticipated for active management or harvest, **is climate resiliency, habitat benefits or watershed protection** reflected in the management plans?

If so, how many acres? _____
Describe the type of plan and acreage subject to the plan. Please include the relevant plan or pages in the application:

_____

_____

_____

Does the project include forest land intended to be managed passively for ecological benefit, with explicit restrictions on timber harvest over the long-term?
If so, how many acres? _____

Describe the type of restriction or stewardship plan and the applicable terms:
_____
_____
_____

Recreational opportunities:
What public recreational opportunities will the project provide? Check all that apply.
Recreational opportunities will be verified by DCS during the site visit.

- ❑ Trail-based activities (ex. hiking, Nordic skiing)
- ❑ Wilderness activities (ex. camping, hunting)
- ❑ Water-based activities (ex. canoeing, swimming, fishing, skating)
- ❑ Educational activities (ex. Organized nature walks, trainings, outdoor classroom)

4. BUDGET

A. Proposed budget: Provide an itemized budget for property acquisitions and associated costs using the budget format provided below.

Note that while the maximum reimbursement for the project as a whole is 50% (up to $1,250,000), individual project components may be reimbursed at a higher or lower rate *as long as the balance of funding requested does not exceed 50% of grant request within the first fiscal year of the grant award*. Bargain sales and gifts of property interests should be captured under 'Partners Share'.

Federal partners are not eligible to receive reimbursement.

Expense	Partner involved	Partner's share (e.g. 'match')	EEA share	Total cost
Parcel # ___				
Example: Fee purchase	*Town Land Trust*	*$50,000*	*$50,000*	*$100,000*
Parcel/component totals				
Parcel # ___				

Parcel/component totals				
Parcel # __				
Parcel/component totals				
Parcel # ___				
Parcel/component totals				
Parcel # ___				
Parcel/component totals				
TOTAL PROJECT COST & FUNDING REQUEST				

B. Funding and match sources: Identify the sources of funding and whether funding has been secured. *Applicants selected to receive funding may not use other state funding sources for acquisition costs on the same property interest, unless it is state funding contributed by a state agency participating as a project partner. Use of CPA or Cape Cod Land Bank funds is permitted.*

Funding source	Project partner recipient	Amount	Secured or pending?

Attachment B: Landscape Partnership Grant Program Project Selection System

A grant review committee will consider each project and make funding recommendations based upon partnership support and overall project quality. The grant review committee considers:

1. **Local Support (5 points)**
   Does the Project include a municipal partner? *No = 0 Yes = 5 points*

2. **Biodiversity and Landscape Protection (27 points)**
   By how much does total eligible project acreage exceed the minimum required acreage?
   1-19.9% = 2 points 20 -39.9% = 4 39-50.9% = 6 51% + = 8

   What percent of total project acres are within NHESP BioMap Core Habitat or Critical Natural Landscape?
   1-19.9% = 1point 20.0-39.9% = 2 40.0-59.9% = 3 60.0-79.9% = 4 80.0-100% = 6

   What is the average TNC Climate Resiliency score?
   Below Average (<-2.0 to -0.41 SD)= 0 points Average (-0.4 to 0.5 SD) = 3 Above Average (>2 to 0.51 SD) = 5

   What is the total adjacent, protected open space acreage?
   1-100 acres = 3 points 100 – 299 acres = 4 300-499 acres = 6 500+ acres = 8

3. **Water Resources (9 points)**
   What percent of the project acreage is within 500 feet of the ocean, a lake, pond, river, stream, or wetland?
   1-24.9% = 1 point 25-49.9 = 2 50-74.9% = 3 75-100% = 4

   What percent of the project acreage is within a drinking water supply area (Zone I/II, A/B; IWPA), or a medium- or high-yield, or sole-source aquifer? *1-4.9% = 0 points 5-24.9% = 1 25-49.9% = 3 50% or more = 5*

4. **Forested Lands (10 points)**
   What percent of the project acreage is forested and either proposed to be managed under a forest stewardship, climate-smart, or other similar forest management plan focused on climate, watershed or habitat benefits, OR; will be passively managed with restrictions on timber harvest imposed through a conservation restriction or deed restriction?
   1-24.9% = 2points 25.0-49.9% = 6 50.0-74.9% = 8 75.0-100% = 10

5. **Climate Vulnerability Preparedness (15 points)**

Project Benefits	Exceptional Benefit 5 points	Moderate Benefit 2 points	Limited Benefit 0-1point
Habitat Connectivity			
Benefits to water resources (lakes, ponds, rivers, coastal habitats)			
Benefit to communities, particularly environmentally burdened populations as identified by MassEnviroScreen			

6. **Recreational Opportunities (16 points)**

Activity	Good 4 points	Limited 2 points	Not provided 0 pts
Trail-based (hiking, etc.)			
Wilderness (camping, hunting, etc.)			
Water-based (canoeing, skating, etc.)			
Education (organized nature walks, classes)			

7. **Project Readiness (8 points)**
   Projects will be rated on readiness based on information in the applications and the site visits (1-8 points)

8. **Overall Project Quality (10 points)**
   1-10 points will be awarded based on project quality.

Attachment C: Requirements for purchases funded through the Community Preservation Act (CPA)

The Community Preservation Act (CPA) and Cape Cod Land Bank Act state that land acquired with CPA or land bank funds must be bound by a permanent restriction (see excerpt of acts below). The CPA requires that, for fee acquisitions, the municipality convey a Ch. 184 Section 32 Conservation Restriction to a qualified 501(c)(3) organization whose purpose is land and/or water conservation (e.g., land trusts). **Conveyance of a CR to a qualified entity is required for reimbursement under this grant program.**

Points to remember when conveying a Conservation Restriction:

1. Votes to acquire the property and authorizing use of CPA funding, should authorize the conveyance of the CR and indicate that the purchase of the property and conveyance of the CR be a simultaneous closing.
2. The deed to the municipality should provide the flexibility to ensure the municipality may grant the CR to an entity authorized to hold a CR under M.G.L. Ch. 184, Sec. 32.
3. The restriction must be recorded **after** the fee simple deed (even if immediately after), for the unrestricted value (and therefore higher value) of the property to be used for reimbursement calculations under the grant award.
4. Since the funding statute *requires* the restriction,a party seeking a charitable contribution deduction for a bargain sale of property may not be able to use the unrestricted value of the property in calculating the tax benefit.
5. The "proceeds" clause of the conservation restriction, if conveyed at no cost to the grantee, must reflect that the municipality (as the fee owner) receives all of the proceeds of an extinguishment or taking, and the grantee receives none of such proceeds. In the event that the land is ever converted to non-conservation use, the municipality would still be responsible for identifying unprotected property of equal or greater monetary and conservation value and use to replace the converted property as though the land were owned in fee simple.

Community Preservation Act
Section 12 of the Chapter 44B Real property interest; deed restriction; management

(a) A real property interest that is acquired with monies from the Community Preservation Fund shall be bound by a permanent restriction, recorded as a separate instrument, that meets the requirements of sections 31 to 33, inclusive, of chapter 184 limiting the use of the interest to the purpose for which it was acquired. The permanent restriction shall run with the land and shall be enforceable by the city or town or the commonwealth. The permanent restriction may also run to the benefit of a nonprofit organization, charitable corporation or foundation selected by the city or town with the right to enforce the restriction. The legislative body may appropriate monies from the Community Preservation Fund to pay a non-profit organization created pursuant to chapter 180 to hold, monitor and enforce the deed restriction on the property.

(b) Real property interests acquired under this chapter shall be owned and managed by the city or town, but the legislative body may delegate management of such property to the conservation commission, the historical commission, the board of park commissioners or the housing authority, or, in the case of interests to acquire sites for future wellhead development by a water district, a water supply district or a fire district. The legislative body may also delegate management of such property to a nonprofit organization created under chapter 180 or chapter 203.

Chapter 293 of the Acts of 1998: AN ACT RELATIVE TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CAPE COD OPEN SPACE LAND ACQUISITION PROGRAM

Section 3. Any real property interest in open space purchased with land bank funds shall be retained in natural, scenic, or open condition and shall be bound by a permanent deed restriction limiting the use of the interest to the purpose for which it was acquired. Said deed restriction shall run with the land...

Attachment D: Sample Municipal Vote

Each municipal partner should draft its warrant article or city council order. It is strongly recommended that the warrant article or city council order is prepared with the guidance of city/town counsel, and in consultation with the treasurer and/or accountant to ensure that the appropriate sections of funding sources to be referenced are noted in the warrant article. The format for the vote will vary with the type of project, source of funding, etc. However, all votes should include the following elements:

I. Authorization to expend an amount equal to the full acquisition and/or development costs of the municipal partners component of the project. The full costs must be raised or appropriated through current tax levy or borrowed.

II. Indication of the source of funding (Conservation Fund, Community Preservation Act Fund, general fund, borrowing, etc.). M.G.L. Chapter 44, sections 7, 8C, and 12(a) on Municipal Indebtedness, allows cities and towns to borrow in anticipation of funding and requires that a grant agreement be executed before the treasurer actually obtains the borrowed amount. This assures DCS that the municipality has 100% of the total project cost, and assures the municipality that the project need not be completed if the proposal does not receive grant assistance. For further advice, please contact the Department of Revenue, Division of Local Services at (617) 626-2300.

III. Indicate that the land interest is being acquired either for conservation and passive outdoor recreation purposes (Chapter 40, Section 8c) or, in the case of land purchased for park or playground, for active recreation purposes (Chapter 45, Section 3 or 14, for example) and will be in the care and control of the appropriate commission or department.

IV. Authorization for the appropriate commission (conservation commission, or recreation commission if park or playground) to seek funding under the Landscape Partnership grant program, and enter any necessary contracts thereto.

V. If a propery taking is anticipated, the conservation commission must request, in writing, that the selectmen or city council take the property via eminent domain.

VI. The vote may also allow the subsequent conveyance of a Conservation Restriction on the property.

VII. The vote may also include language permitting a license or lease agreement to manage the property consistent with this grant program for maintenance, etc.

The following is a sample vote authorizing the acquisition of conservation land using DCS financial assistance. This is intended only as a point of reference. **Municipal Counsel should always be consulted when drafting Town Meeting warrant articles or City Council orders.** The draft article or order should be submitted to DCS for review prior to the Town Meeting or City Council to ensure compliance with the grant program.

Sample for Conservation Acquisition Project – Town Meeting Warrant Article

> To see if the CITY/TOWN will vote to appropriate, and authorize the Treasurer with the approval of the Selectmen [describe method of appropriation and/or borrowing according to M.G.L. Chapter 44, note particularly Section 8C], to borrow the sum of $TOTAL PROJECT COST, for the purpose of purchasing for conservation and passive recreation purposes, by eminent domain or negotiated purchase or otherwise, a certain property together with buildings thereon, known as the PROPERTY NAME consisting of XXX acres, more or less, as shown on a plan entitled "Plan of Land in MUNICIPALITY made by SURVEYING FIRM dated XX/XX/XX"; that said land be conveyed to said CITY/TOWN under the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40, Section 8c, and as it may hereafter be amended and other Massachusetts statutes relating to Conservation, to be managed and controlled by the Conservation Commission of MUNICIPALITY, and the Conservation Commission be authorized to file on behalf of MUNICIPALITY any and all applications deemed necessary for the Landscape Partnership grant and any other grants and /or funding from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts deemed necessary and/or any others in any way connected with the scope of this Article, and the CITY/TOWN and the Conservation Commission be authorized to enter into all agreements and execute any and all instruments as may be necessary on behalf of MUNICIPALITY to affect said purchase.

Sample Vote Language for Community Preservation Act Projects

To see if the Town [or City] will vote to raise, borrow and/or appropriate $Total Project Cost for the acquisition by gift, negotiated purchase or eminent domain of a parcel of land of approximately __ +/-acres owned by OWNER as described on Assessors Map__, Parcel __, to be managed and controlled by the Conservation Commission of the Town [or City] of XXX in accordance with Chapter 40, Section 8C for conservation and passive recreation purposes, and to meet said appropriate with funds transferred and/or borrowed in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 293, the Community Preservation Act and to authorize the Treasurer, with the approval of the Board of Selectmen, to issue any bonds or notes that may be necessary for that purpose, as authorized by M.G.L. Chapter 44, or any other enabling authority, and that the Town Manager [or Board of Selectmen or City Council or Mayor] be authorized to file on behalf of the Town [or City] of XXX any and all applications deemed necessary under the Self-Help Act (M.G.L. Chapter 132A, Section 11) [or LWCF or USH] or any other applications for funds in any way connected with the scope of this acquisition, and the Town Manager and the Board of Selectmen [or Mayor and the City Council] and the Conservation Commission be authorized, as they deem appropriate, to enter into all agreements and execute any and all instruments including the conveyance of a perpetual conservation restriction in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 184 as required by Section 12(a) of Chapter 44B or Chapter 293 Section 10 of the Acts of 1998 as amended, as may be necessary on behalf of the Town [or City] of XXX to affect said purchase. Said conservation restriction may be granted to the [Name of Grantee] or any other organization qualified and willing to hold such a restriction.

Attachment E: Legislation Guiding this Grant Program

Chapter 286 of the Acts of 2014, Sec. 2

2000-7058.. For the landscape partnership grant program to assist not-for-profit corporations and cities and towns acting through their conservation commissions or water departments, in cooperation with the departments of conservation and recreation, fish and game and agricultural resources, to acquire interests in land to permanently conserve and steward large, landscape-scale land conservation projects, and to assist cities and towns in local zoning and planning efforts; to further conservation and connectivity of working farms, forests and open space and prevent low-density sprawl development; provided, that the not-for-profit corporation shall be formed for 1 of the purposes described in section 4 of chapter 180 of the General Laws and the corporation shall be considered an exempt organization within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code; provided further, that the grants shall be expended in the completion of an approved project by an eligible corporation, city or town in the approved acquisition of land and interests in land for permanent conservation purposes pursuant to Article 97 of the Amendments to the Constitution or sections 31 and 32 of chapter 184 of the General Laws and for associated costs, including planning, study, due diligence, title, environmental site assessment, appraisal services, interest on loans, provided that the rate does not exceed the current average market rate, site restoration and for stewardship, including baseline documentation report creation and long-term stewardship monitoring agreements and for technical assistance in the development of city and town by-laws for natural resource protection zoning purposes and related city and town conservation purposes and for study, inventory and related work in preparation for and assessment of marketable ecosystem services provided by the project lands; provided further, that grant funds shall be expended in the completion of an approved project by an eligible corporation, city or town for a project previously approved by the secretary of energy and environmental affairs under this program in an amount that the secretary shall determine to be equitable in consideration of anticipated benefits from the cost of the project, provided, however, that in no event shall the amount exceed 50 per cent of the total cost of the project as approved by the secretary; provided further, that all projects shall provide appropriate public access as determined by the secretary;...

MGL Ch. 312 of the Acts of 2008, Sec. 2A

2000-7016.. For the conservation partnership grant program to assist not-for-profit corporations in acquiring interests in lands suitable for purposes of conservation or recreation; provided, that the corporation shall be formed for one of the purposes described in section 4 of chapter 180 of the General Laws and the corporation shall be considered an exempt organization within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code; provided further, that grant funds shall be expended to reimburse an eligible corporation for money expended by it in establishing a project approved by the secretary of energy and environmental affairs under this program in an amount that the secretary shall determine to be equitable in consideration of anticipated benefits from the project, but in no event shall the amount of the reimbursement exceed 50 per cent of the cost of the project; provided further, that no reimbursement shall be made under this item to a corporation unless a project application is filed by the corporation with the secretary setting forth the plans and information that the secretary may require and approved by the secretary, nor until the corporation shall have certified, in a manner approved by the secretary, its ability to provide an amount equal to the total cost of the project, nor until the project has been completed, to the satisfaction of the secretary, in accordance with the approved plans; provided further, that all projects shall include the grant by the corporation of an appropriate perpetual conservation restriction, within the meaning of sections 31 and 32 of chapter 184 of the General Laws, to the city or town in which the project is located, to be managed by either its conservation or its recreation commission, or a state agency, or both; provided further, that all projects shall provide appropriate public access as determined by the secretary; and provided further, that the secretary may adopt rules and regulations to carry out this item.

2200-7017.. For grants to cities, towns and districts for the acquisition of lands and waters and easements by those cities, towns and districts to protect and conserve groundwater aquifers and recharge areas, surface water supplies and watershed areas, and surface or underground lands adjacent to those resources, for the protection of water that is determined by the department of environmental protection to be of potential use for water supply purposes; provided, that any grants approved by the department and provided to cities, towns and districts from this item may be for up to 60 per cent of the eligible costs of the projects

2300-7010.. For the acquisition of land and interests in land by the department of fish and game and for associated costs, including planning, study, due diligence, title and appraisal services, site restoration and stewardship for the purpose of protecting the native flora and fauna communities and for associated costs; provided, that the commissioner of fish and game may develop and utilize scientifically-based evaluation criteria to identify and select the most biologically significant areas throughout the commonwealth including, but not limited to, specific parcels, and that these lands may be purchased after being selected by this process and approved by the commissioner of fisheries and wildlife; provided further, that funds may be expended on the development and implementation of a stewardship program on lands under the care and control of the department of fish and game and its divisions, either in fee simple or through conservation easement, including but not limited to resource and land use monitoring, baseline documentation report creation, signage, boundary marking and monitoring, stewardship planning, stewardship personnel, stewardship database development, ecological monitoring, and enforcement of conservation restrictions or detection and resolution of encroachments on land owned in fee simple, and repair of damage related to illegal off-road vehicle trespass; provided further, that funds may be used for inventory, restoration and reclamation of recently acquired land, including demolition of structures, removal of debris, eradication of non-native species, and other services essential to these reclamation efforts

2500-7012.. For a program to acquire agricultural preservation restrictions under sections 23 to 26, inclusive, of chapter 20 of the General Laws; provided, that any person or entity that receives funds from this item shall be encouraged to participate in any programs of the department of agricultural resources that may be suggested by the commissioner of agricultural resources; provided further, that funds may be used for implementation of a stewardship program on APR lands including, but not limited to, resource and land use monitoring, boundary delineation and monitoring, stewardship planning, ecological monitoring, and enforcement of agricultural preservation restrictions on existing and newly acquired APR properties; as well as the creation of new opportunities that seek to enhance the sustainability and viability of APR properties

2800-7011.. For the acquisition of land and interests in land by the department of conservation and recreation and for associated costs, including planning, study, due diligence, title and appraisal services, site restoration, stewardship, and costs associated with the defense of eminent domain takings for the purpose of protecting significant natural and cultural resources of the commonwealth and enhancing the department's system of forests, parks and reservations; provided, that funds may be used for development and implementation of a stewardship program on lands under the care and control of the department of conservation and recreation including, but not limited to, resource and land use monitoring, signage, boundary delineation and monitoring, preparation of baseline documentation, stewardship planning, ecological monitoring, and enforcement of conservation restrictions or detection and resolution of encroachments on land owned in fee simple, and repair of damage to property related to illegal uses, including off-road vehicle trespass; provided further, that funds may be used for inventory, restoration and reclamation of recently acquired land, including demolition of structures, removal of debris, eradication of non-native species, and other services essential to these reclamation efforts;...

2800-7022.. For the purpose of protecting and conserving the ecological and economic integrity of the commonwealth's privately held forestlands, including but not limited to acquisition of interests in land including easements, agreements, rights of first refusal and covenants; for a forestry conservation restriction program to acquire conservation restrictions under section 31 of chapter 184 for private working forests actively devoted to sustainable forestry, and classified as forest land under section 2 of chapter 61 of the General Laws, in order to encourage sustainable forestry, protect prime forest land, and help the viability and affordability of sustainable forestry; provided, that working forest conservation restrictions shall be held by the department of agriculture or the department of conservation and recreation or the municipality in which the land is located; provided further, that projects shall be rated based on the suitability of land to grow forest products, the fair market value of the land as determined by independent appraisers, proximity to other protected working forests, management history of the project to serve as a model of sustainable forestry and the degree to which the conservation restriction would serve to preserve and make affordable the practice of sustainable forestry in the commonwealth; and for grants to public and non-public organizations and private landowners for education, technical assistance, forest stewardship practices, enhancement of ecosystem services and carbon sequestration, estate planning, interests in land or associated land acquisition costs; grants to private forest landowners, forest businesses and non-

profits for the forest viability program for enhancing sustainable economic benefits of forests, including business plans and implementation grants and no-development covenants to be held by the department of agriculture or the department of conservation and recreation, including but not limited to forest management plans for private landowners; provided, that projects and funding shall be approved by the secretary of energy and environmental affairs; and provided further, that projects may be carried out in cooperation with other governmental agencies, private landowners, and conservation organizations according to management agreements approved by the secretary.

MGL Ch. 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;…