

MassDEP BWR Outreach Proposed FY27 MS4 Grant Updates

Pre-RFR Information & Feedback Session

August 11, 2026



Why update the MS4 grant program?

- Increased pressure on municipalities to meet local funding needs with fewer state and federal resources
- Stormwater is high-impact on water quality but receives lower priority for funding than drinking and wastewater projects
- Funding source requires “capital” focus for grant-funded projects
- Proposed EPA-Issued MS4 permit is moving towards finalization



Enlarged Image Text:

Bioretention areas reduce pollution and beautify landscapes.
Pocket parks add greenspaces and enhance neighborhoods.
Local governments and utilities can make smart investments in stormwater management.
Enhanced paved parking lots and more landscaping helps promote local jobs.
Permeable paving and planter boxes help reduce flooding.

Eligible Entities

Prior RFRs

- Two (2) or more Massachusetts municipalities that are subject to the 2016 Small MS4 General Permit;
- Regional Planning Agencies, Massachusetts Stormwater Coalitions, and/or non-profit organizations acting on behalf of acting on behalf of two (2) or more municipalities that are subject to the 2016 Small MS4 General Permit

Proposed FY27

- One or more Massachusetts municipalities that are subject to the 2016 Small MS4 General Permit and partnered with one or more:
 - Regional Planning Agency;
 - Massachusetts stormwater coalition; and/or
 - Similar non-profit organization; that are acting on behalf of municipalities that are subject to the 2016 Small MS4 General Permit.

Eligible Projects – Prior RFRs

- Assessment tool(s) for identifying retrofit sites;
- Data intake and field-certification tool(s) for Best Management Practices (BMP); operation and maintenance programs;
- Formation of new regional MS4 coalitions in areas where none exist;
- MS4 capital investments, including investments in equipment and electronic resources;
- Outreach and education services, materials, and/or strategies for (a) public engagement and/or (b) establishment of stormwater enterprise funds or stormwater utilities;
- Survey research to identify the needs of smaller MS4 municipalities; and/or
- Asset management tools for tracking and maintaining stormwater infrastructure such as catch basins, culverts, and BMPs



Storm drain outfall
Staff Photo, 1985

Eligible Projects – Proposed FY27

Regional Projects to meet MS4 Permit Requirements

- Assessment tool(s) for identifying retrofit sites and/or for tracking and maintaining stormwater infrastructure such as catch basins, culverts, and outfalls;
- Data intake, field-certification tool(s) and procedures for structural stormwater control measures and/or their long-term operations and maintenance programs;
- Formation of regional stormwater enterprise funds or stormwater utilities in areas where none exist
- Outreach and education services, materials, and/or strategies for public engagement and education may be proposed as a secondary activity to projects identified above *not to exceed twenty percent (20%) of the project budget.*

Local Projects to meet MS4 Permit Requirements

- Formation of stormwater enterprise funds or stormwater utilities in areas where none exist
- Design or installation of phosphorus control measures identified in local Phosphorus Control Plans
- Investments in equipment and electronic resources that support stormwater control measures (outside of routine maintenance)
- Design or installation of structural stormwater control measures (e.g. infiltration basins, bioswales, rain gardens, wet ponds, catch basin & outfall retrofits or upgrades);
- Other infrastructure enhancements to support water quality, flow regulation/hydraulic control, and flood mitigation improvements (e.g., Stream restoration projects, upgrades to culverts and outfalls, etc.)



Ineligible Projects – No change

- Duplicate work already done by any Massachusetts stormwater coalition or apply to repeat a previously funded project delivery to another region (previously funded projects may be viewed online at: [Resources for MS4 Compliance on Mass.gov.](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/resources-for-ms4-compliance));
- Fund any activity necessary to address or remedy an enforcement action such as, but not limited to, noncompliance with a local, state, or federal permit; and/or
- Fund the operation and maintenance of storm or sanitary sewer systems.



Street sweeping is maintenance!

Photo by Stuart Cahill, Boston Herald

Application Updates

Program Priorities

- The project may be performed in one municipality but must have regional applicability or benefit (partnership should support this)
- The project must tangibly improve stormwater management for one or more MS4 small system permit holder
- Projects that can be performed quickly within the timeframe allotted (typ. 4 months)

Updates to Application Structure

- New certifications related to being in good standing & ability to enter into contract in timely manner
- Contact information and project team identification
- Commonwealth W-9 for lead entity to be submitted with application
- Application outline & budget table are required



Feedback Session