

LAND ACQUISITIONS FOR FOREST RESERVES GRANT

INFORMATION SESSION, October 22, 2025

Division of Conservation Services, EEA

A G E N D A

- Program Goals
- Grant Overview (Eligibility, Requirements, Awards)
- Application Process
- Timeline for awards, reimbursement
- Questions

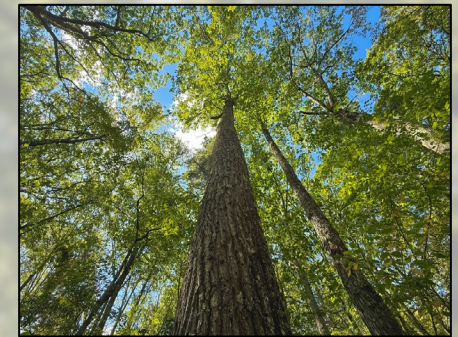
FORESTS RESERVES IN MASSACHUSETTS:

- *Forests as Climate Solutions* aims to accelerate progress toward protecting 30x30 and support the climate goal of net-zero statewide greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.
- Climate Forestry Committee (CFC) recommendation to expand forest reserves to 10% (300,000 acres) of Massachusetts' forests.
- DCR manages ~113,000 acres of designated forest reserves (DCR 2012 Landscape Designations)

GRANT AWARDS

- 50% of eligible project costs
- Maximum award of \$425,000
- Funding available for costs incurred in FY27
(July 1, 2026 - June 30, 2027)
- Reimbursement based

DEADLINE is February 6th, 2026



FOREST RESERVES GRANT PROGRAM GOALS

Seeking projects that will:

- Permanently protect large, contiguous, resilient forests
- Allow natural processes, including natural disturbances, to determine long-term forest structure, composition and ecology.
- Provide opportunities for passive recreation and public enjoyment

FORESTS RESERVES IN MASSACHUSETTS:

- Natural processes and disturbances (e.g. wind, ice storms) determine forest composition, structure and dynamics.
- Deliberate human intervention is minimal (exceptions for specific, unacceptable risk to human safety or forest health).
- Commercial forestry, timber harvest is prohibited.

GRANT APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

- Qualified 501(c)(3) organizations formed for land conservation purposes or other conservation organizations (such as Land Banks)
- Municipalities
 - Vote needed prior to contracting (e.g. July, 2026) to authorize acquisition for conservation purposes (M.G.L. Chapter 40, §8c).

SEEKING PROJECTS THAT PROMOTE:

- Large, connected forest; adjacency to other designated Reserves prioritized.
- Resilience; TNC resiliency score, conditions at site visit
- BioMap Core Habitat or Critical Natural Landscape
- Structurally complex, biodiverse forest
- Forest with limited invasive/exotic species, or deer browse
- Organisms/communities associated with mature forest conditions.
- Public enjoyment

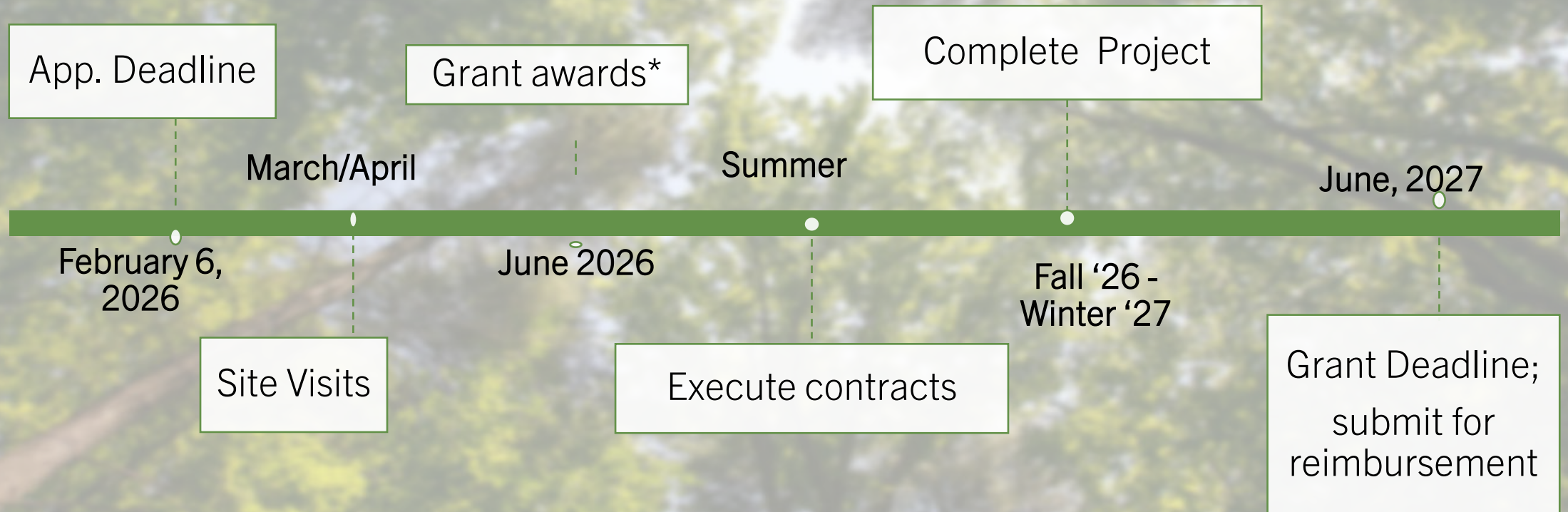
GRANT PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

- Purchase of forested land in fee simple or a CR
- Land must be currently unprotected (ch. 61 lands are eligible).
- In addition to purchase, budget may include due diligence costs (e.g. survey, title work), baseline document report, recording fees.

GRANT PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

- Appraisal (fee or CR) not older than a year (Feb. 7, 2025)
- Recommend excluding structures, particularly residence from CR
- **Appraisal must exclude structures**
- (Municipalities) Draft vote language
- Final budget
- Project summary
- Maps of project, resource values, connectivity etc.

TIMELINE FOR AWARDS & PROJECT COMPLETION



GRANT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Visit [Grants Management System \(GMS\)](#) on Mass.gov for instructions

Instructional playlist on YouTube:

[https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLzQVK6KiTOqyPW5PUOcFE42iRJgdm8LA &si=Wm2I78OgFDZ-1nA](https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLzQVK6KiTOqyPW5PUOcFE42iRJgdm8LA&si=Wm2I78OgFDZ-1nA)

[User guide](#) on the GMS Portal





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Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs Grants Management System

The grants administration team is reviewing your user profile information. You'll be able to access the grantee portal once it's verified. You can still edit your user profile.

[Update your user profile](#)

RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS

- Create GMS account
- Review bid document, application
- Solicit appraisal
- Draft vote (Municipalities)
- Draft response to application questions, project summary, finalize maps.

Apply through GMS by February 6 !

Questions?

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