

FY26 Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant Workshops Questions and Answers

Question: When can a successful grant applicant from the FY26 grant round expect to receive a signed state standard contract from the Division of Conservation Services (DCS)?

Answer: Federal grant decisions should be expected in the Fall 2026, so a reasonable timeframe for receiving a signed contract would be January 2027.

Question: Is the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Grant Program offered annually?

Answer: Typically, the grant is posted annually in October with a yearly January deadline.

Question: Is the maximum LWCF grant reimbursement amount 50%?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Will DCS hire and contract with the review appraiser?

Answer: Yes. More information on the appraisal process can be found in the [grant's BID document](#), specifically on pages 4 and 8.

Question: Is it the grant applicant's responsibility to hire the appraiser?

Answer: Yes.

Question: If on the floor of Town Meeting, voters change elements of the project's design and therefore the cost estimate, how does that effect the grant award amount?

Answer: Grant applicants should do as much public participation as possible prior to submitting a grant application so that the grant's cost estimates are solid from the time of submittal. Deleting elements of a project's design post award could have a negative impact on the grant's rating, perhaps taking the grant out of contention for funding. It also is difficult from a budgeting perspective to reduce a grant award after it's been approved by the National Park Service (NPS).

Question: If Community Preservation Act funding is needed for the project, but the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) doesn't vote for the project, how does that effect a LWCF grant award?

Answer: Any LWCF project that is selected by DCS and NPS must have a successful Town Meeting or City Council vote, which must appropriate 100% of the total project cost. If the CPC doesn't approve the project, the Town Meeting or City Council vote wouldn't, in theory, be able to include the appropriation of the total project cost, and the grantee would not be able to provide all required documentation. Therefore, the grant award would be taken away.

Question: Is there sample vote language DCS can provide grant applicants?

Answer: Sample municipal vote language can be found in Attachment D of the [grant's BID document](#).

Question: What are the LWCF priorities referred to in the rating system?

Answer: Essentially, the [four SCORP priorities](#).

Question: What happens if the applicant hits “submit” on the Grant Management System (GMS) prior to being ready?

Answer: Please direct any questions on the GMS to the [GMS Portal](#).

Question: Are there other grants that can be used for conservation and recreation projects?

Answer: For municipalities, the [LAND Grant Program](#) and [PARC Grant Program](#) are good options.

Question: Can a grantee receive a LWCF and LAND/PARC grant for the same project?

Answer: No, two types of grants cannot be awarded to the same project unless each is going to distinct and separate phase of the project.

Question: What information about Environmental Justice (EJ) communities do you need in the application?

Answer: Follow the instructions in the project description, but, in general, [the location of the project in an EJ community](#) should be provided.

Question: For projects that are not in design phase yet, can we still apply for funding?

Answer: Applications must include a site design and cost estimate. If you do not have those materials, the National Park Service will not accept an application as it is not possible to know how much a project will cost, making an accurate grant award impossible.

Question: We are working on a project and have schematic designs and estimates for final design costs, but not the AutoCAD construction designs. Are the AutoCAD final construction designs needed prior to applying?

Answer: No, those final construction designs are not required, and are in fact eligible for reimbursement, but we will need the cost estimate for that work.

Question: The application states that overhead powerlines must be buried. Is this the case for transmission lines as well?

Answer: Overhead wires need to be buried, but in the case of transmission lines those do not need to be buried. A power company should have an easement for overhead powerlines and this easement should be included in the application.

Question: We are drafting the municipal vote, but are still seeking final approval from the Community Preservation Coalition (CPC) for Community Preservation Act funding. Is it still acceptable to include that CPC funding in the vote language at this time even if the final approval is still pending?

Answer: Yes, since the vote is in draft form, that's fine. You may review/revise the vote language again at later date pending the CPC's decision.

Question: Can you confirm that a parcel subject to a Conservation Restriction (CR) held by the town remains eligible for funding? We are looking to upgrade a trail on the property, but the town does not own the property in fee.

Answer: Yes, for LWCF purposes, a town holding a CR on the property would qualify as eligible.

Question: Is there a website with examples of projects funded in the past?

Answer: We do not have a website with past projects listed. I would be glad to meet with you to discuss your specific project or share last year's press release with list of last years projects. Those can also be found at: www.mass.gov/eea.

Question: The municipal vote language requires municipal approval to apply. Can you confirm it is still appropriate to include that language even if we are pursuing the vote after the application?

Answer: Yes, the vote authorization to apply can be applied retroactively.