

FY24 Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant Workshops Questions and Answers

Question: Has the Land and Water Conservation Fund grant round been offered historically?

Answer: The LWCF grant celebrated its 60th anniversary in September. While it has not been offered annually, it has been offered regularly since its inception.

Question: Is there a successful application I can look at for my specific type of project?

Answer: Given that there are nearly 600 individual LWCF grants, most likely yes, but this may be an unhelpful question given how long ago a project was funded. It may be better to find a time to meet with Melissa Cryan and go over project specific questions. You can email her at melissa.cryan@mass.gov or call her at (857) 274-7173 to set up a time to meet.

Question: Are LWCF-funded sites dedicated to conservation or recreation in perpetuity?

Answer: Yes, that is a condition of the grant funding.

Question: If floating docks are installed, what area would be protected parkland, just the docks or the entire park?

Answer: The entire park the docks are in would be protected as the recreational element isn't what becomes protected, but the park the funded element is in.

Question: If we are resubmitting the same project that was not selected for a PARC grant in September 2024, may we reuse the Mass Historic and Natural Heritage letters from that application?

Answer: Yes, since they are only a few months old.

Question: If I am applying on behalf of the Department of Fish and Game, does the project have to have Lands Committee approval?

Answer: Not necessarily, but we will need to have some letter of commitment from the agency that the project is looked upon by it favorably.

Question: Can multiple sites be combined into the same grant application?

Answer: Yes, as long as it's for the same type of work, i.e., basketball courts in three parks.

Question: May we apply for trail work on land owned by a non-profit organization?

Answer: No. The applicant must have an ownership interest in the land that they are applying for.

Question: Is the construction of ADA paths eligible for funding, how about shade structures and stages?

Answer: As long as they are being constructed on conservation land (for the ADA paths) or parkland owned by the applicant.

Question: Can a municipality receive a LWCF grant and PARC grant for the same park?

Answer: As long as each grant goes to distinct elements within the park, that is fine.

Question: Is renovation of a parking lot at a public beach eligible for funding?

Answer: Yes, any recreational amenity is eligible. However, a request for funding to solely improve a parking lot may not rank highly or be competitive.

Question: I am working in tandem with city staff on writing an application. Is it feasible for multiple individuals to access the online application to upload information?

Answer: The online application is facilitated through MS formstack. It cannot be accessed by multiple users simultaneously. However, if you save the application and share the link and log-in with other staff, you might be able to enable access to other individuals.

Question: If an application identifies an eligible waiver to the Buy America, Build America requirement is anticipated, how is that judged in the application?

Answer: Applicants are not required to identify how they anticipate meeting this federal requirement in the application, it is only required of awarded grantees.

Question: Could you further clarify the difference between a trail and a walking path?

Answer: A walking path may be of any distance or surface – an example is a paved walking path around the perimeter of a park. A trail must be of a reasonably long distance and/or link multiple parks or sites or recreational interest.

Question: We are submitting a grant application for the purchase (acquisition) of a property with a legacy camp. Is the removal of camp structures an eligible cost?

Answer: The only eligible cost for an acquisition grant is the cost of the land.

Question: We are presently pursuing a permit from DEP for a project we will be seeking grant funding for but may not receive the permit until the end of calendar year 2025. Will the project still be eligible or do all project permits need to be in hand at time of application?

Answer: It will depend upon the nature of the permit required. You are encouraged to review permit requirements outlined in the BID document and to set up time to talk to Melissa further about details.

Question: Are projects on properties that have received LWCF funding in the past eligible?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Is the purchase of a trail easement across private property (for public access) eligible?

Answer: The acquisition of a Conservation Restriction is eligible, but the specifics of a trail easement may make the project ineligible. Set up a time to talk to Melissa to discuss the project in more detail.

Question: Are raised boardwalks eligible for funding under 'trails'?

Answer: As long as they would not cause a conversion of conservation land and trigger Article 97. Speak to Melissa about the specifics of your project.

Question: Can other state grants be used to contribute to the 50% of the costs not reimbursed under a LWCF award?

Answer: First, the LWCF grant is a reimbursement grant and requires that all grantees have budgeted for 100% of the total project cost. Second, depending on the specific grant and other details, it may work. You should discuss with Melissa.

Question: How do you determine how many projects are funded?

Answer: We rate projects, rank based on their final score and fund as many of the applications received with funding that is allocated. The total number of projects funded will depend upon the federal funding allocation, and how much funding is requested by top-ranked applicants.