**Summary of Questions and Responses - April 27, 2018**

s.319 FFY 2019 Nonpoint Source Competitive Grants Program Request for Responses

An RFR information session was held on April 18, 2018 in the Worcester office of the MassDEP, 8 New Bond Street, Worcester, MA. The purpose was to provide a public opportunity to discuss any aspect of the 319 Nonpoint Source Competitive Grants Program, including questions particularly related to the FFY2019 Request for Responses which was issued April 5, 2018.

The questions and responses are provided here:

*Q:* Is the groundwork for bylaw development to help meet MS4 permit requirements eligible as match for 319?

*A:* It depends on the type of bylaw. Assuming this proposal is from a MS4 area, the answer would be yes it is eligible, unless it is specific to a bylaw required by the permit, such as a bylaw for IDDE, post- construction, or construction. A more general LID bylaw for example is not required by the permit and would be eligible.

*Q:* If I have a current 319 grant then am I eligible to apply for another?

A: Yes. And please note past performance on a 319 project is one of the Department’s review criteria.

*Q:* Does it matter if the project water body is on the 2014 or the draft 2016 Integrated list?

*A:* No.

*Q:* Is mapping work in a MS4 regulated area eligible?

*A:* It depends as mapping stormwater systems and/or outfalls, in a MS4 area is not an eligible activity. You can’t address a specific permit requirement with 319 funds and mapping stormwater systems is required in a regulated area. Mapping a river corridor that happens to be in a MS4 area, as part of a protection program, would be eligible.

*Q:* Is a NRCS-approved Conservation Plan helpful to show as part of previous work?

*A:* Yes

*Q:* Is a water body with a documented blue-green algae problem eligible?

*A:* Yes

*Q:* Is aeration eligible?

*A:* Yes

*Q:* Where shall be put our narrative on past history in my proposal?

*A:* You may include it as part of a project description in the Concise Statement of the Problem.

*Q:* Where shall I place a citation to justify proposed work?

*A:* You may include the citation and page number(s) as part of a project description in the Concise Statement of the Problem and add the cited report as an attachment.

*Q:* There is so much climate change information out there: what should I include in my proposal?

*A:* Include applicable and concise information including references and footnotes to support your proposal narrative.

*Q:* Providing CD copies of our proposal may prove difficult – can we submit electronic copies of our proposals on flash drives?

*A:* Yes

*Q:* Is agricultural work in an MS4 area eligible?

*A:* Yes, agriculture work is a notable exception to the MS4 rule, as that can be funded everywhere.

**The applicable Questions and Responses from FFY2018 are provided here:**

*Q:* We are almost done with our Watershed Based Plan – do we need it completed and submitted along with the proposal?

*A:* No, but projects that will provide a completed WBP as a deliverable will be most competitive. See RFR Question and Responses #16-19.

*Q:* I am considering a green infrastructure project, using streetscape designs and runoff calculations developed for US Forest Service urban forestry grant. How advanced must the designs need to be? Might its scale be too small to be competitive, and does it make sense to include another GI project nearby?

*A:* Conceptual designs are required and must provide sufficient detail to allow the proposal review committee to evaluate the viability of the proposal. There is no project too small, but practically speaking, a small scale project matched along with other eligible tasks within the watershed could make a project more cost effective and thus more competitive.

*Q:* If we’re awarded a contract and we have to pick either a DWBE or a DMBE, which shall we pick?

*A:* Choose the one that best provides the services that you need. At the end of the project, if you have not met the DBE fair share goals, you may apply for a waiver for the unmet goals.

*Q:* If we’re just looking to remove bacteria, how specific should the calculations be, per BMP or per the overall project?

*A:* Estimated quantities of all targeted pollutants to be removed must be provided for the overall project.

*Q:* The waterbody is listed, but not for bacteria. Geese have been identified as an issue: is geese deterrent landscaping eligible?

*A:* It is eligible, however you may consider making it part of larger project that addresses the listed impairment(s) to make it more competitive.

*Q:* Our plans and estimated costs may not be completed by the proposal deadline. What kind of flexibility is there to change the scope down after the fact?

*A:* Unavoidable changes would be accommodated, but uncertainty at the outset reduces competitiveness. The most competitive proposals provide definitive information about the project, sufficient to reassure reviewers that the project is feasible and ready to build as soon as funds become available.

*Q:* There is a TMDL in place for one pollutant, but can we go after another pollutant that is not on the 303d list?

*A:* It is highly unlikely that a proposal that bypasses a listed pollutant in favor of one that is not documented would be competitive. However, the non-listed pollutant could be addressed as part of a larger project or as part of BMP that would also be effective for the listed impairment.

*Q:* We’re considering developing a stormwater utility and we want to assess the cost to comply with MS4. Is this eligible?

*A:* Yes, although to be most competitive it should be part of a larger project to work toward developing the utility or other funding mechanism.

*Q:* Stormwater discharges drain into a pond, which is not currently listed, and the pond drains into the Assabet River, which is listed. Can we apply for BMPs to address the outfalls draining into the pond, or is it more competitive to focus on the outfalls that drain directly into the river?

*A:* Both are eligible, but is there data that shows the outfalls are major contributors of pollutants? Maximizing the removal of listed pollutants entering the Assabet should be the ultimate goal. A watershed-based plan that provides an overall strategy for prioritizing pollutant mitigation in the targeted watershed is highly recommended to justify the approach.