

2024 Narragansett Bay & Watershed Restoration Fund (BWRF) Request for Proposals (RFP)



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Welcome to the 2024 BWRF Request for Proposals (RFP) Workshop!



Workshop will be recorded & posted on the DEM BWRF webpage:

[Narragansett Bay and Water Restoration Fund \(BWRF\) Grants | Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management \(ri.gov\)](#)

- Overview
- Sub-fund Project Categories
- Eligible Projects
- Eligible Organizations & Capacity Requirements
- Eligible Costs
- Project Budget & Match Requirements
- How to Apply, Key Dates, & Evaluation Criteria
- Questions & Answers: Please submit Questions via the Zoom Q&A module

Bay & Watershed Restoration Fund (BWRF)



- Purpose: to protect and enhance the designated uses of our waters: swimming, fishing, shellfishing, drinking water supply, and healthy aquatic life.
- Created by voter-approved [Green Bonds](#) – most recently in 2022
- Approximately \$3 million in funding is anticipated to be made available
- Grants will be awarded on a competitive basis pursuant to:
 - the [Request for Proposals](#) issued on December 12, 2023 and
 - the [Rules and Regulations governing the BWRF](#)

BWRF Sub-fund Project Categories:



The BWRF provides funds for **implementation** projects through 3 sub-funds:

1. Riparian Buffer and Aquatic Habitat Restoration
2. Non-Point Source & Stormwater Pollution Control
3. Flood Prevention and Mitigation

Riparian Buffer & Aquatic Habitat Restoration / Aquatic Invasive Plant Control Sub-fund



DEM is also encouraging riparian buffer restoration projects that may include the removal of pavement and the re-planting of native vegetation to prevent erosion, reduce sedimentation, provide habitat, and improve water quality



Riparian Buffer & Aquatic Habitat Restoration / Aquatic Invasive Plant Control Sub-fund



These projects focus on **habitat**:

- Enhancing Riparian Buffers
- Restore River Habitat & Connectivity
- Improve Freshwater lakes, ponds, rivers or reservoirs
- Control Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS)*
(must list specific AIS plant(s); must be publicly accessible for recreation OR a source to those waters; does not include hand pulling activities)



Projects must demonstrate consistency with scientifically and technically sound lake management plans or invasive plant management recommendations developed by qualified entities.

Non-Point Source & Stormwater Pollution Control Sub-fund



This sub-fund provides financial assistance to a range of projects that improve or abate water pollution associated with **stormwater** runoff and other **non-point sources** of pollution, such as erosion and sedimentation.

Encouraged projects include (but are not limited to):

- Implementing actions recommended in TMDL water quality restoration plans that target non-point source pollution including stormwater discharges.
- Capital projects that enhance local stormwater management through acquisition of vehicles/equipment that are used to maintain stormwater infrastructure
- Projects that reduce the discharge of untreated stormwater to surface waters by retaining stormwater through upland attenuation, infiltration, or other green infrastructure means

Non-Point Source & Stormwater Pollution Control Sub-fund



Flood Prevention and Mitigation Sub-fund



This sub-fund provides financial assistance for projects that will address flooding of coastal or inland waters in a manner that incorporates or enhances natural ecosystems and hydrology.

Encouraged projects include (but are not limited to):

- Removal of physical structures and revegetation of floodplains
- Removal of impervious surfaces and revegetation in coastal and riparian areas prone to flooding to increase retention of stormwater runoff
- Creation of increased vegetated storage capacity in floodplains
- Removal/replacement of culverts that prevents flooding through improved management of peak flows and improves watercourse continuity for fish and wildlife
- Enhancement of coastal/inland habitat resiliency in specific locations that mitigate flooding risks to infrastructure, buildings, or other structures

BWRF Grant Proposal Key Dates



| BWRF Grant Category | Grant Proposal Due Date |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Riparian Buffer & Aquatic Habitat Restoration (including Aquatic Invasive Plant Control Projects) | February 2, 2024 4:00 p.m. |
| Non-point Source & Stormwater Pollution Control | February 28, 2024 4:00 p.m. |
| Flood Prevention and Mitigation | |

Review of proposals and award of grants will take place in February through April 2024.



BWRF Project Eligibility— Is my project eligible?

BWRF supports implementation projects and does not fund stand-alone feasibility studies or design projects. A proposed project must be clear on what is to be constructed or implemented. Expenses related to final design and permitting can be funded **only** if they are included as a phase of a construction project.

BWRF does not fund research projects. However, costs for environmental monitoring activities to track and measure implementation project outcomes may be allowable.

Flood Prevention and Mitigation Sub-fund: Projects designed **solely** to address drainage or flooding problems without other environmental benefits are not eligible. To be eligible flood mitigation projects must provide environmental co-benefits related to water quality or aquatic habitat improvement.

Who is Eligible?



| Sub-fund Category | Governmental | Non-governmental | | |
|---|--|---|---|------------------|
| | Municipal/State/regional government, quasi-state agencies, public schools and universities | Non-profit watershed organizations, environmental organizations, conservation districts, lake associations, land trusts | Other non-governmental entities: for profit business, private schools, non-profit organizations | Private citizens |
| Riparian Buffer & Aquatic Habitat Restoration/Aquatic Invasive Plant Control Sub-fund | Yes/ Eligible | Yes/Eligible | Yes/Eligible | No |
| Nonpoint Source & Stormwater Pollution Control Sub-fund | Yes/ Eligible | Yes/ Eligible | Yes/Eligible | No |
| Flood Prevention and Mitigation Sub-fund | Yes/Eligible | Yes/Eligible | No | No |

Demonstrating Capacity



Organizational Capacity

- Does your organization have the people-power to organize, maintain schedules and deadlines, and keep the project running in a timely manner? If not, can you partner with another organization that can assist?

Construction Project Capacity

- Has your organization managed a construction project before? How will the project be monitored?

Administrative Capacity

- How will you comply with federal requirements such as:
 - Accounting
 - Record keeping
 - Procurement
 - Reporting procedures

Demonstrating Capacity



Financial Capacity

- BWRF grants are conducted on a **reimbursement** basis. Does your organization have enough cash reserves to pay for the entire project and then be reimbursed afterward?
- The Rhode Island Infrastructure Bank (RIIB) may be able to assist for green infrastructure grants if your organization doesn't have funds on hand for the project.
 - RIIB Stormwater Project Accelerator Project: Provides upfront capital for green stormwater infrastructure project that will eventually be funded through state and local reimbursement grants.
 - No interest on the loan, but there is a 1.5% fee. The fee is an eligible grant expense.

What costs are allowable?



Eligible expenses may include the costs of:

- personnel salary and fringe*
- Travel & Training (transport costs such as tolls and mileage rate x # miles)
- Supplies (<\$5,000; expendable field/lab/office supplies, film, postage, books)
- Equipment (> \$5,000)
- Construction (costs associated with construction of BMPs including permit fees)
- contractual services directly related to project implementation (consultants, engineering and design)

*With respect to personnel, DEM generally will not subsidize salaries of existing governmental staff, but encourages such expenses to be allocated as match.

What costs are NOT allowed?



Examples Projects NOT allowed are those focused **solely*** on:

- technical assistance
- education
- training
- technology transfer
- community planning
- water quality monitoring

activities may be eligible as **tasks in projects that are directly associated with implementing a restoration action that meets the BWRF objectives listed in Section 1 of the RFP.*

Routine maintenance of existing structural BMPs is not eligible for grant reimbursement or to serve as match to the grant.

Project Budget: How Much Can I Request?



- There are no single maximum grant limits. DEM generally expects projects to fall within the below ranges:
 - For the Riparian Buffer & Aquatic Habitat Restoration (including Aquatic Invasive Plant Control) Sub-fund: between \$7,500 and \$75,000.
 - For the Non-Point Source & Stormwater Pollution Control and Flood Prevention & Mitigation Sub-funds: between \$25,000 and \$400,000.
- Grant awards will be made on a reimbursable basis. The grants will award up to fifty percent (50%) of eligible costs. At DEM discretion, up to seventy-five percent (75%) of eligible project costs can be funded.

Match Requirements in Budget



Match is an indicator of local/organization commitment to a project and is considered in proposal eligibility and ranking.

All applications must provide match. The requested match is equal to or exceeds the fifty percent (50%) of project costs. DEM, at its discretion may consider reduced match of 25% upon request. The match must:

1. Relate directly to the project
2. Be reasonable valued
3. Be supported by documentation

Match may include:

1. Cash
2. The value of non-cash, in-kind contributions (i.e. value of equipment donated for the project)
3. Value of goods and services directly contributed to the project
4. Volunteer services for project activities and travel costs may be valued as match consistent with rates ordinarily paid by employers for similar work (currently \$31.96 per hour)

Project Time Periods



The grant awards will be authorized via grant agreements for a limited period of time.

Projects ready to proceed that will be completed within a one to two year time period will be favored.

With adequate supporting justification, DEM will consider three-year project time periods for larger, more complex projects.

Projects not promptly initiated or that fall substantially behind schedule may have their grant awards rescinded or reduced.

Not Allowed:


- Starting project work that you'll seek reimbursement for prior to approval of a fully executed grant agreement
- Indirect expenses
- Advance payments
- Automatic extensions



How to Apply



1. Review the RFP for complete instructions: [Request for Proposals](https://dem.ri.gov/sites/g/files/xkgbur861/files/2023-12/bwrf-rfp_0.pdf)
https://dem.ri.gov/sites/g/files/xkgbur861/files/2023-12/bwrf-rfp_0.pdf



2024 BAY AND WATERSHED RESTORATION FUND (BWRF) GRANTS

Announcement of Request for Proposals (RFP)

December 12, 2023

| BWRF Grant Category | Grant Proposal Due Date |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Riparian Buffer & Aquatic Habitat Restoration (including Aquatic Invasive Plant Control Projects) | February 2, 2024 4:00 p.m. |
| Non-point Source & Stormwater Pollution Control | February 28, 2024 4:00 p.m. |
| Flood Prevention and Mitigation | |

The Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (DEM) is pleased to announce the availability of grants to assist in the implementation of projects that promote restoration of Rhode Island's waters and watersheds. Specifically, this Request for Proposals (RFP)

- BUDGET DETAIL**

What is your source of match?

Applicant's Funds ☐

 Third Party Funds ☐

 In-Kind Services ☐

Table A: Project Tasks¹, Schedule, and Estimated Costs

| Task # | Task Description | Schedule ² | Requested Amount | Match Amount |
|---------------|------------------|-----------------------|------------------|--------------|
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| | | | | |
| Totals | | | | |

1. Tasks must include progress and final reports.
 2. Please express as the month number in which the task is expected to be completed from start of project (i.e., Month 2)

| Budget Category | | | | | Requested Grant Amount | Match Amount | Total Cost of Category |
|--|-------|--------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|--------------|------------------------|
| 1. Salary and Fringe¹ | | | | | | | |
| Name | Title | Salary | Percent Time Charged to Project | Fringe (as percent of salary) | Total Salary Cost | | |
| | | | | | | | |
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| | | | | | | | |
| 2. Indirect Costs² | | | | | | | |
| 3. Supplies³ | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| 4. Equipment⁴ | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| 5. Travel and Training⁵ | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| 6. Contractual⁶ | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| 7. Construction⁷ | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| 8. Other⁸ | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| Totals | | | | | | | |
| To request reduced match, enter the reduced match in the match column in this row (no less than 25% of total projects costs required). | | | | | | | |

Table B notes:


1. Include salaries and fringe benefits paid for work performed on the project. "Salary" should include the rate per hour by position. "Fringe benefits" are employment benefits given in addition to wages or salary, such as health, retirement, etc. Grant funds are typically not used to pay municipal employee's salaries; these expenses should be used as match.
2. Indirect costs can only be charged by those entities that have negotiated an indirect rate with the State of RI in advance.
3. Supplies include expendable items, such as office, field and lab supplies, film, postage, books or equipment etc.

If additional rows needed, tables may be uploaded as separate files

How to Apply



1. Review the RFP for complete instructions: [Request for Proposals](#)
2. Download and fully complete each section of the [BWRF Grant Application Package](#) (fillable Adobe PDF; 9 questions plus 2 tables)
3. Visit the [BWRF Grant Submission Portal](#).
 - Complete the questions to enter your project information (AIS control projects have extra screen)
 - Upload the BWRF Grant Application Package, a Site Map, and any optional supporting documentation you'd like to include (i.e. letters of support, tables if changed)



Narragansett Bay and Watershed Restoration Fund (BWRF) Grant Submission Portal

Applicant Information and Organizational Contact

Please complete this online application to apply to RIDEM for BWRF Project Funding.

* 1. Type of Applicant

☐ Municipal City or Town

☐ Non-profit Organization

* 14. Please check off which aquatic invasive plants are that apply):

☐ Hydrilla (*Hydrilla verticillata*)

☐ Water Chestnut (*Trapa natans*)

☐ Variable milfoil (*Myriophyllum heterophyllum*)

☐ Parrot feather (*Myriophyllum aquaticum*)

☐ Eurasian milfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*)

☐ Fanwort (*Cabomba caroliniana*)

☐ Brazilian elodea (*Egeria densa*)

☐ Spiny naiad (*Najas minor*)

☐ American Lotus (*Nelumbo lutea*)

☐ Spotted Lotus (*Nelumbo speciosa*)

Narragansett Bay and Watershed Restoration Fund (BWRF) Grant Submission Portal

Supporting Documentation

* 17. All BWRF grant submissions must include the completed BWRF Grant Application Package at <https://dem.ri.gov/media/74451/download>

Use the button below to upload your completed BWRF Grant Application Package.

No file chosen

* 18. Use the button below to upload a map of your proposed project.

No file chosen

19. Use the button below to upload any additional supporting documents for your proposed project (background data, letters of support, etc.)

What Makes a Good Proposal?



- Project is specific and will help address a demonstrated water quality or aquatic habitat concern
- Project is well thought-out with clear roles described for the grantee and any partner organizations
- Grant applicant has adequate authority to carry out the project
- Project narrative is concise, clear, and easy to understand
- Budget is realistic and match is appropriate

Project Evaluation

1. DEM staff will screen and provide initial review to verify that the proposed project is eligible
2. The Grant Selection Committee will review each application based on the project evaluation criteria (listed on the next slide)
3. The selected projects are submitted to the DEM Director for final approval.

Announcement and development of grant agreement contracts follow.



Project Evaluation Criteria



- Severity and magnitude of the problem
- Value of the resource being protected and the public benefit derived
- Beneficial impact to the waters of the state (pollution load reduction) and/or to aquatic/riparian habitat for fish and wildlife
- Technical merit and likelihood of success
- Consistency with approved plans
- Applicant capacity and history of prior projects
- Readiness to proceed
- Quality of proposal (including accuracy of financial information)
- Does the project address environmental justice issues?

Six Common Application Pitfalls



1. Proposal format NOT followed
2. No measurable goals
3. Project not eligible under the sub-funds
4. No (or poor) site maps
5. Poorly planned; e.g. missing key steps such as permitting
6. Projected outcomes are unrealistic

Questions? Contact:



| Grant Sub-fund Category | Primary BWRF RFP & Program Contacts | Additional Contact |
|--|---|---|
| Riparian Buffer & Aquatic Habitat Restoration Sub-fund (including Aquatic Invasive Plant Control Projects) | Katie DeGoosh-DiMarzio Environmental Scientist III Office of Water Resources 235 Promenade Street Providence, RI, 02908 (401) 537-4217 Katie.degoosh@dem.ri.gov | Sue Kiernan Administrator Office of Water Resources (401) 537-4246 sue.kiernan@dem.ri.gov |
| Nonpoint Source & Stormwater Pollution Control Sub-fund Flood Prevention and Mitigation Sub-fund | Sean McCormick Environmental Scientist III Office of Water Resources 235 Promenade St. Providence, RI 02908 (401) 537-4254 sean.mccormick@dem.ri.gov | |