



DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES AND
ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL

**CWA Section 319 Nonpoint Source Grant
Program FY 2025
Request for Proposals (RFP)**

Synopsis

The Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control's Nonpoint Source (NPS) Program is soliciting for proposals, through a competitive grant process, to improve water quality by reducing nutrient and sediment loads in impaired waterbodies of Delaware. The Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) NPS Program will administer the grant application process and provide technical and financial guidance during the grant application and project period.

For the FY 2025 Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 319(h) grant RFP process, approximately \$250,000 is available for selected proposals. Funding for proposal(s) selected is available upon the execution of a fully signed grant agreement and establishment of a purchase order. For this RFP, grant funds are available in April/May 2025. Grant funds may be available prior to this timeline; however, it is contingent upon Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) processing timeline.

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Important Timelines

December 2, 2024 – Issuance of RFP

March 5, 2025 – Proposals due to the DNREC's NPS Program office electronically by no later than 4:30PM. Applications received after this time will not be reviewed. Submissions must be sent to NPS.Grants@delaware.gov.

April/May 2025 – Grant awards announced, and recipients notified.

1. INTRODUCTION AND FUNDING

Purpose

The Delaware Nonpoint Source Program administers a competitive grant made possible through Section 319(h) of the Federal Clean Water Act. The grant provides funding opportunities for projects designed to reduce nonpoint source (NPS) pollution in Delaware. NPS pollution can be defined as any pollution that originates from a diffuse source (such as an open field or a road) and is transported to surface or ground waters through leaching or runoff.

Reduction of NPS pollution may often be achieved through incorporation of specific best management practices (BMPs) into project work plans. Projects may target any source of NPS pollution, and can include agriculture, silviculture, construction, marinas, septic systems, and hydro-modification activities. Proposals are reviewed and evaluated, and those which are determined to meet specific requirements are eligible for funding. All projects must include a non-Federal match totaling at least 40 percent of the total project cost. For an example match calculation, please refer to Section 2 (Eligibility & Applicant Requirements) below.

Best Management Practices (BMPs)

Best Management Practice (BMP) means a practice, or combination of practices, that is determined to be an effective and practicable means of preventing or reducing the amount of pollution generated by nonpoint sources to a level compatible with water quality goals. BMPs should be selected based on the goals of a Watershed Implementation Plan or Pollution Control Strategy.

Primary sources for standards and specifications for BMPs appropriate to Delaware are listed below:

- Natural Resources Conservation Service, Field Office Technical Guide <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/technical/fotg/> ;
- Delaware Nutrient Management Commission – State Technical Standards <https://agriculture.delaware.gov/nutrient-management/publications-resources/>
- DNREC, Delaware Erosion and Sediment Control Handbook <https://dnrec.alpha.delaware.gov/watershed-stewardship/sediment-stormwater/handbook/>
- The Chesapeake Bay Program’s Quick Reference Guide for Best Management Practices https://www.chesapeakebay.net/documents/BMP-Guide_Full.pdf ; and
- The Delaware Forest Service offers assistance to landowners who wish to learn more about Forestry BMPs. For more information, contact the Forestry Program at (302) 698-4500.

Measurable Environmental Results

Section 319 grant projects are required to include appropriate measures to gauge the effectiveness of the project. These measures can be divided into two categories: Outputs and Outcomes. Outputs are the “deliverables” of a project (i.e., the number of brochures distributed, the dollars spent, the attendance at an outreach event, the number of BMPs installed, etc.). The outcomes are the ultimate impacts of those outputs on water quality. When possible, it is best to estimate the Measurable Environmental Results, or MERs, in terms of both the outputs and the resulting outcomes.

In many cases, this involves water quality, biological, habitat and/or other environmental monitoring. This includes generating new environmental data through water quality and/or biological monitoring activities, using existing environmental data from other sources (secondary data), using computer and/or other models to characterize environmental conditions, and creating new geo-spatial data and/or using existing geo-spatial data from other sources.

Depending upon the type of project and the goals of the project, environmental monitoring may not be appropriate to determine the effectiveness and success of a project. Additional types of activities include tracking land use changes, before and after pictures of restoration work; conducting surveys of stakeholder knowledge; or other types of monitoring specific to the goals of the project.

If the project will be implementing BMPs that directly reduce sediment and nutrient runoff, grant recipients may utilize the online Pollutant Load Estimation Tool (PLET). This tool can be found on EPA’s website at: <https://www.epa.gov/nps/plet>. Grant recipients are encouraged to utilize the Chesapeake Assessment Scenario Tool (CAST) for calculating applicable load reductions at the following website: <https://cast.chesapeakebay.net/>

For reporting purposes, implemented BMPs must also be georeferenced so that load reductions can be estimated on a watershed scale. The spatial locations can be submitted to the NPS Program utilizing a digital map showing latitude and longitude coordinates. If you have any questions concerning the georeferencing of BMPs associated with your project, please contact the NPS Program via email at NPS.Grants@delaware.gov.

Funding

Projects selected for funding can begin work after the purchase order is executed. Payment of Section 319 funds are reimbursable for costs incurred as work is completed and upon receipt of an approved invoice and any other applicable documentation. All invoices must provide an itemized list of expenditures and a report of in-kind/cash match contributions. Other cost-share documentation may also be required upon request of the NPS Program. Payment can be expected approximately 4-6 weeks after DNREC receives appropriate invoices.

Equipment purchased with Section 319 funding must follow the conditions present in the EPA Section 319 Grant Guidance Document. Equipment disposition guidelines are found in 2 CFR

200.313. Equipment with a fair market value of \$5,000 or more are subject to stringent equipment disposition instructions.

2. ELIGIBILITY & APPLICANT REQUIREMENTS

Applicant Eligibility

A project can be sponsored by both public and private entities, including local governments (county, city, or town), conservation districts, tribal authorities, regional development centers, local school systems, colleges and universities, local nonprofit organizations, State agencies, Federal agencies, watershed groups, for-profit groups, homeowner's associations, and individuals. Project grants to individuals are limited to demonstration projects.

Environmental justice seeks equity for minority and low-income communities that may be disproportionately exposed – and vulnerable – to adverse environmental impacts. Applicants are encouraged to identify projects in historically under-engaged or under-served communities. For the purpose of this RFP and the evaluation of applications, “underserved communities” means people/communities of color, low income, tribal and indigenous populations, and other vulnerable populations such as the elderly, children, and those who have pre-existing medical conditions.

Award Information

Grant award recipients will be required to sign a memorandum of agreement/grant agreement with the Department. All award recipients are required to comply with all State and Federal laws and guidelines pertaining to the use of grant funds. The Department of Natural Resources (DNREC) Nonpoint Source (NPS) Program will administer the grant application process and provide technical and financial guidance. Grant award recipients may be subject to site visits from the DNREC and EPA NPS Programs for routine monitoring and/or auditing of the project selected for grant funding.

The award made under this RFP will support lasting water quality improvements necessary in impaired watersheds to meet water quality limits as identified by EPA approved (a-i), nine element watershed implementation plans.

Awarded funding must be utilized for implementation of the project. Construction costs, project materials, and labor costs related directly to the construction/implementation would be applicable for funding. Administrative costs shall not exceed 10% of the grant award. Examples of administrative costs include, but are not limited to:

- Preparation and submission of grant applications
- Fiscal tracking of grant funds
- Maintaining project files
- Collection and submission of deliverables

DNREC reserves the right to reject all proposals and make no awards under this announcement. DNREC also reserves the right to make additional awards under this announcement, consistent with Department policy and guidance if additional funding becomes available after the original selections are made. Funding levels are subject to change without notice.

Engineering Requirements

DNREC requires appropriate licensed professional seal construction plans. This applies to implementation projects that include construction. Grant reimbursement will not occur if sealed plans are not submitted prior to construction. DNREC reserves the right to waive the requirement on a case-by-case basis after review of the grant proposal.

Projects with over 5,000 square feet of disturbance must comply with the Delaware Sediment and Stormwater Regulations. Projects must also comply with any State or Federal permits.

Expense Reimbursements

The Section 319 Grant is a reimbursable grant. Project work and submission of expense reimbursements are not allowable until a grant agreement is executed, and a purchase order has been established. Recipients are responsible for submitting detailed invoices for allowable expenditures at a period of no more than once per month for disbursement of funds. Disbursement procedures will be provided at the time of grant award notification.

Geographical Requirements – Eligible Watersheds

Priority will be given to those projects whose goal is to improve the water quality of water bodies identified as having nonpoint source pollution impairments, as documented in EPA approved watershed implementation plans including: the Appoquinimink River, Broadkill River, Chester River and Choptank River, Christina Basin (Brandywine Creek, Christina River, Red Clay Creek and White Clay Creek sub watersheds), Inland Bays, Nanticoke River (includes Marshyhope Creek, Gum Branch, Gravelly Branch, Deep Creek, and Broad Creek sub watersheds), Pocomoke River and Wicomico River, St. Jones River and the Upper Chesapeake (Elk River, C&D Canal, Bohemia River and Sassafra River sub watersheds) Watersheds. The detailed list of watershed plans acceptable for Section 319 grant funding can be found here: [Watershed Plans and Strategies - DNREC \(delaware.gov\)](#) under the heading titled “*EPA-Approved Watershed Implementation Plans (For Section 319 Grants)*”.

The 305(b) reports and monitoring data are used to compile a list of impaired waters, commonly referred to as the 303(d) list. Delaware’s most recent Integrated Reports (303(d) and 305(b)) can be found on DNREC’s Watershed Assessment and Management Section website:

[Integrated Report: 305\(b\) Report and 303\(d\) List - DNREC Alpha \(delaware.gov\)](#)

The NPS Program may also prioritize funding according to additional environmental factors, such as land use and existing BMPs if these factors can help determine where projects will be most effective at reducing nonpoint source pollution. Grant recipients that failed to meet program requirements in the past may be ineligible to receive additional project funding.

Ineligible Costs and Projects

The following are ineligible uses of the Section 319 grant funds:

- Purchase of agricultural equipment, or other large pieces of equipment (equipment modifications and leasing are allowable);
- Purchase of land or land easements (these activities can be counted as matching funds in some cases);
- Any project which is directed at water quantity rather than water quality, such as dredging, drainage, or flood control;
- Any project where repairs and/or maintenance activities are the primary scope of work;
- Any practices, equipment, or supplies used to fulfill the requirements of any Federal permit, such as a NPDES permit (ex. Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit), or to meet enforcement requirements;
- Any practices required as the result of enforcement action taken by the DNREC (penalty or punitive related requirements);
- Wetland mitigation sites;
- Incentive payments or yield losses;
- Practices not sanctioned by DNREC or a partner agency of DNREC; and
- Practices not installed in accordance with standards and specifications developed by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), DNREC, or other recognized standards.

Insurance Requirements

There are insurance requirements for grant recipients. Applicants should review their existing insurance coverages and determine if their current insurance coverage meets the requirements established below. If the applicant's current insurance does not meet the requirements established below, please explain in the submittal how any deficiencies in the required insurance coverages will be handled. Certificate of insurance and/or copies of the insurance policies will be required before a grant agreement is executed.

Grantee shall maintain the following insurance coverage:

- Worker's Compensation and Employer's Liability Insurance in accordance with applicable law, and
- Comprehensive General Liability - \$1,000,000.00 per occurrence/\$3,000,000 general aggregate, and
- Medical/Professional Liability - \$1,000,000.00 per occurrence/\$3,000,000 general aggregate; or
- Miscellaneous Errors and Omissions - \$1,000,000.00 per occurrence/\$3,000,000 general aggregate, or
- Product Liability - \$1,000,000.00 per occurrence/\$3,000,000 general aggregate, and
- If required to transport State employees, Automotive Liability Insurance covering all automotive units used in the work with limits of not less than \$100,000 each person and \$300,000 each accident as to bodily injury and \$25,000 as to property damage to others.

Matching Requirements

The Section 319 grant will typically fund 60% of the total project cost. The remaining 40% is the responsibility of the grant recipient and constitutes the non-federal match. For example, a proposal with a \$100,000 total project cost could receive \$60,000 in Section 319 grant funds and the recipient would be required to provide \$40,000 in matching funds. The minimum required match for the proposal can also be calculated by multiplying the Section 319 grant amount requested by 0.66667 (ex. \$60,000 Section 319 grant funding request x 0.66667 = \$40,000 required non-federal match for a \$100,000 project total). Match may be a combination of cash and/or in-kind services. Preference will be given to applicants with cash match. Match documented must be directly associated with the project and for work done to fulfill the agreement/contract tasks. Federal dollars may not be used to match Section 319 grant funds.

A letter of commitment from any organization pledging matching funds or in-kind services must be attached to the application. Activities not eligible for grant funds are also not eligible for match. Match for volunteer time should be calculated using the national volunteer rate established by the independent sector specific to the State of Delaware¹. Applicants who are unsure of the value of volunteer time should contact the NPS Program for guidance.

Subcontracting

Any project subcontracts need to be approved by the DNREC Project Manager prior to being signed (executed). This review is to ensure that the scope of services, budget, and schedule coincide with the overall contractual agreement between DNREC and the project sponsor, the subcontractor is registered with the Secretary of State, and that the subcontractor is not suspended from doing business with the State. DNREC does not perform a legal review of project subcontracts.

3. GRANT PROPOSAL FORMAT & EVALUATION CRITERIA

Grant Proposal Format

Applicants are required to develop their grant proposal and format the content into the following headings:

- Cover Page
- Project Description
- Objectives / Tasks / Timelines
- Measurable Environmental Results
- Operation and Maintenance
- Budget
- Qualifications
- Insurance
- Signature Page

¹ Based on 2024 National Value of Volunteer Time.
<https://independentsector.org/resource/value-of-volunteer-time/>

The proposal must address all criteria detailed in the “Proposal Evaluation Criteria” and be organized utilizing the grant proposal format shown above. If questions in the proposal evaluation criteria are not applicable to your proposal, please provide an explanation as to why. The proposal evaluation criteria are the metrics that the grant review and ranking committee will utilize for scoring submitted proposals. Applicants may be contacted if the selection committee has any questions regarding their proposal(s).

Proposal Evaluation Criteria

Cover Page

The cover page of the proposal needs to include the information below. If an applicant utilizes the [Grant Application Form](#) and completes the first two pages of that document, it will satisfy the cover page requirements. Otherwise, the applicant will need to provide the relevant information as part of their overall submission.

1. Project title;
2. Name of organization submitting the proposal;
3. Project Manager and title;
4. Sam.gov Number;
5. Organization’s physical mailing address;
6. Phone number;
7. E-mail address;
8. County (New Castle, Kent, and/or Sussex);
9. Identify the watershed(s) the project proposal covers;
10. Identify the project timeline;
11. Estimated project start date;
12. Estimated project end date;
13. Total project cost;
14. Section 319 grant funding amount requested;
15. Non-federal match amount required to provide (calculated based on the grant request); and
16. Identify key project partners

Signature Page

This page should contain the signatures of the grant applicant, landowner(s) on which the project will occur, and the responsible party for any matching funds. Letters of support from the landowners, and letters of future maintenance may be included in this section.

A. Geographic Location (10 Points):

Background and Justification: Describe the issue or problem to be addressed by the grant proposal and why the work is necessary. Include the following:

- Identify the County and/or Municipality in which the project is located.
- Give site specific information (i.e., street location, parcel identification, waterbody draining to, etc.).
- Identify the watershed and sub-watershed (i.e., Brandywine Creek sub watershed within the Christina Basin watershed).
- Provide a map that shows the project location.

- Include any site reconnaissance information, including but not limited to recharge feasibility mapping, soils mapping and/or soils testing, contours via Lidar data or survey, drainage area/acres treated, % impervious cover.
- Include an aerial of the project area with the limits and important features clearly noted. Additional exhibits are encouraged.
- List the impairments of the watershed and/or site area, including management plans that have been developed.
- Give the TMDL reduction requirements established, watershed restoration plan, or pollution control strategy recommendations.
- Give local factors and concerns (i.e., in a CSO area, in a highly impervious area with no stormwater controls, in a highly eroding stream channel, etc.).

B. Meets Program Goals and Priorities (40 points):

Describe the project proposal in as much detail as possible. Include the following items:

- What type of practices are being proposed? What is the acreage, square footage of practice area, and/or cubic footage of the BMP being proposed?
- What is the nutrient/sediment reduction and runoff reduction efficiencies for the practice(s)?
 - Using the US EPA online Pollutant Load Estimation Tool (PLET) <https://www.epa.gov/nps/plet>, the Chesapeake Assessment and Scenario Tool (CAST) <https://cast.chesapeakebay.net/>, the Delaware Urban Runoff Management Model version 2 (DURMM v.2), or other regional approved method, estimate the total pounds of nutrient/sediment reduction and/or volume of runoff reduction based on the site parameters. Include documentation of how the reduction figures were calculated.
- What is the expected lifespan of the improvement as proposed?
- Will nutrient/sediment reduction and/or runoff reduction remain a constant over the lifespan of the improvement, or will there be a diminishing return?
- Who will design the project?
- Who will construct the project?
- Is there any monitoring associated with the project? If so, what kind? *Note: if water quality monitoring is proposed as part of the project, an EPA approved Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) will be required.*
<https://www.epa.gov/quality/quality-assurance-project-plan-development-tool>

C. Technical Merit and Project Feasibility (30 Points):

The proposal will be evaluated on the technical feasibility given the proposed budget and timeline. The proposal should identify the applicant's (and partners) ability to undertake and successfully complete this project. The Review Team will evaluate the applicant's technical ability to successfully complete and manage the proposed project taking into account the applicant's organizational capacity, experience, facilities, and technical expertise to accomplish the proposed plan of work and its likely success.

Time Schedule and Benchmarks (10 points):

- Break down the Scope of Work into tasks/objectives with target dates for completion of each task/objective. It should list target milestones, timelines, and describe how each milestone addresses project tasks/objectives.
- Give a timetable for the implementation of the project. Include any monitoring time as applicable.
- Give a detailed budget for project implementation and monitoring (as applicable).

Cost Effectiveness (10 points):

- Describe the cost effectiveness of the proposal through implementation. Consider the cost of the planning phase as well as the design, construction, monitoring, and long-term maintenance and sustainability of the project.
- Include a description of other alternatives considered and why the selected proposal/approach was chosen.
- Give the amount of dollars spent for the pounds of nutrients/sediment removed and/or volume of runoff reduced.
- Describe how the longevity of the practice relates to the initial cost.

Maintenance (10 points):

- Who will be accountable for the maintenance of the practice after the grant has ended?
- What is the yearly cost to maintain the project?
- What funding is available for maintenance?
- A letter of agreement for future maintenance concerning the lifespan of the BMP should be included.

D. Leveraging/Co-funding (10 points):

The proposal should identify cooperative partnerships with stakeholders, creation of sustainable and effective commitments, and should demonstrate strong support from partners and other relevant agencies and organizations. The applicant may attach letters of support from cooperating agencies identifying how they intend to support the project. Applicants will be evaluated based on the extent they demonstrate how the applicant will coordinate/leverage the funding with other sources of funds (i.e., funding entities, project partners, surrounding communities, and businesses).

Demonstration of leveraging/co-funding from the applicant can be provided through the following examples:

- Match funding
- Cost share
- Co-funding
- Letter(s) of support
- Volunteer Hours

Note: Applicants may choose to demonstrate leveraging by pledging their own funds

above the minimum match requirement or other resources for a voluntary match or cost share. Applicants who choose to cost share voluntarily must meet their cost share obligations if their proposals are selected for award. Please note that only eligible and allowable costs may be used for matches or cost.

E. Programmatic Capability (10 points):

This section should include a list of the applicant's qualifications to complete the project.

- Organizational experience of applicant, partners, and consultants/contractors (if known). If any necessary consultants or contractors are not known at the time of grant preparation, then the means of selecting a qualified candidate should be described. An appropriate licensed professional is required to seal construction plans for implementation projects.
- Plan for timely and successful achievement of the project objectives.
- Other similar grant awards including other grants awarded through the DNREC.

F. Opportunities for Extra Points (10 points):

- Is the project located in a Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice (DEIJ) area that engages under-served communities? Applicants are encouraged, as appropriate, to utilize data from the [EPA Environmental Justice Screening Tool \(EJ Screen\)](#) to identify, characterize, or describe potential affected communities, populations, and/or areas. See [Learn About Environmental Justice | US EPA](#) for more information about environmental justice.
- Does the applicant offer more than the minimum match requirement of the grant?

4. SELECTION PROCESS

A committee consisting of a diverse group of individuals will evaluate and rank all project proposals. Proposals will be reviewed for threshold eligibility purposes as described in the Proposal Evaluation Criteria section of this RFP. Applicant proposals will be reviewed and ranked according to a 100-point scale.

5. HOW TO APPLY

Submission of Proposals

An electronic copy of the proposal and supporting materials (e.g., project support letters from partners) must be submitted to the NPS Program. All proposals must be completed following the Grant Proposal Format detailed in this RFP. Proposals will not be accepted by facsimile machine submission. Please submit all applications electronically to NPS.Grants@Delaware.gov by 4:30PM on March 5, 2025.

The full RFP document and Grant Application Form can be found on the NPS Program website at: <https://de.gov/319grants>.

Email the proposal to:

NPS.Grants@delaware.gov

Subject: FY25 Nonpoint Source Section 319 Grant Proposal

Attn: Ben Coverdale

6. CONTACT INFORMATION

For further details or questions regarding the Section 319 Grant Program, applicants are encouraged to contact M. Benjamin Coverdale (Ben) via email at

Michael.Coverdale@delaware.gov.

The Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control solicits and encourages Minority Business Enterprises (MBE), Women's Business Enterprises (WBE), and Small Business Enterprises (SBE) in all service contracts and is committed to affirmative action, equal opportunity, and diversity of its workforce.