

Stream & Watershed Enhancement Grant

Grant Guidelines

Grant Overview

The mission of the Susquehanna River Basin Commission (SRBC) is to enhance public welfare through comprehensive planning, water supply allocation, and management of the water resources of the Susquehanna River Basin (Basin).

Part of accomplishing this mission includes protecting and restoring fisheries, wetlands and aquatic habitat; protecting water quality and instream uses; and ensuring future availability of flows to the Chesapeake Bay.

The **Stream & Watershed Enhancement Grant** program offers support to local organizations whose work is in keeping with SRBC's mission. This Grant program offers funding for community-based environmental & water resources projects or events that improve, restore or protect our local watersheds. The grant application opens August 07, 2024, and closes October 31, 2024.

Project Eligibility

All projects must be within the Susquehanna River Basin and have significant ties to the water resources of the Basin, the lands that protect the Basin's waters, and/or the communities tied to both.

Eligible projects will successfully propose reasonable activities and outcomes that are focused on efforts that improve, restore or protect watersheds within the Basin. Eligible projects may also propose support (operational or financial) for watershed volunteer, membership, or outreach events in the Basin.

Eligible projects that offer an intersection between watershed support and engagement with Environmental Justice areas will be prioritized.

Applicant Eligibility

The following entities are eligible to apply for a grant:

1. Watershed group – if unincorporated, must be organized with officers and bylaws
2. Educational program or school district
3. Non-profit/501c(3) or equivalent
4. Municipal or County Governments

Grant Criteria Scoring

1. A project summary **(20 points)**:
 - a. Project purpose;
 - b. Projected watershed improvement, restoration or protection; and
 - c. Project design or effort.
2. Collaborative efforts with local partners or community engagement **(10 points)**
3. A reasonable and cost-efficient budget **(10 points)**
4. There are **10 extra points** available for a watershed project that engages with or serves Environmental Justice communities. SRBC will prioritize projects in Environmental Justice communities that reduce pollution, increase community climate resilience, or build community capacity to respond to water resources challenges.

Example Projects

- Watershed education/outreach/support (operational or financial)
- Watershed strategic planning and/or facilitation of planning efforts
- Voluntary/citizen water quality monitoring support
- Water resources youth education or activities
- Water resources community education or activities
- Instream and streamside debris management & collection
- Water-based recreation opportunities
- Livestock streamside-exclusion fencing
- Restoration of overgrazed streamside lands or degraded streams
- Headwater stream protection efforts
- Climate change resiliency projects:
 - Riparian buffer restoration or enhancement
 - Stream or wetland restoration or protection
 - Tree plantings on cleared or impacted lands
 - Rain gardens/community gardens to reduce impervious surfaces

Grant Awards

The grant awards are capped at \$5000 and a cash match is **NOT** required. Funds may be used for direct project implementation costs in addition to select indirect costs such as contracting services, expansion of partnerships, equipment rentals/purchase, and food purchasing for volunteer outreach events between August 07, 2024 and December 31, 2025.

Ineligible Costs

Ineligible costs include routine regulatory obligations, permitting, land development projects, lobbying, litigation, fees for securing other financing or associated with bad debts, interest on borrowed funds, illegal activities or substances, costs associated with personal expenses of board members and/or officers/staff, application preparation fees, and other costs incurred prior to the award of grant funds. Costs incurred prior to August 07, 2024 are ineligible.

Webinars and Technical Assistance

SRBC will conduct a webinar to introduce the program and outline the application process on August 21, 2024. SRBC will also conduct a webinar designed to take application and technical questions nearer the grant application due date on October 16, 2024.

SRBC offers technical assistance for the Grant application on the following dates:

- August 27-28, 2024
- September 24-25, 2024
- October 22-23, 2024

On those dates, a request for assistance can be directed to Erin Lynam (*Policy Specialist & Environmental Justice Coordinator*) at 717-238-0423, ext. 1226 or elynam@srbc.gov. Response times may vary depending on the volume and types of requests received. Receiving technical assistance does not guarantee that an application will receive funding.

How it Works

When a grant is awarded, the project sponsor and SRBC enter into a grant agreement that specifies award conditions. Awards may be in the form of an advance or reimbursement and preference must be specified in the application.