



WATERSHED MANAGEMENT GRANTS

Application Guidelines

PLEASE READ THESE GUIDELINES THOROUGHLY BEFORE APPLYING

FALL 2024 APPLICATION CYCLE – AT A GLANCE	
Application Period Opening:	December 3, 2024
Application Period Closing:	January 10, 2025, by 5:00pm
Maximum Grant Request:	Varies by Project Type (See Pg 4)
Minimum Match Requirement:	Local Government: No Requirement Non-Government Entity: 50% Cost Share
Total Funding Available to Award:	Approximately \$236,000
How to Apply:	Online at https://grants.dnrc.mt.gov/

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) Watershed Management Grant (WMG) Program goals are to provide financial support for the development and implementation of locally led watershed related planning and capacity building activities that conserve, develop, manage, or preserve state natural resources. These goals are aligned with [Montana Code Annotated \(MCA\) Title 85, Chapter 1, Part 6](#).

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Eligible applicants include any division of state government, tribal government, or other county, city, or local political subdivision. These governmental entities have included:

- cities,
- towns,
- counties,
- water and/or sewer districts,
- conservation districts,
- irrigation districts,
- school districts and universities,
- regional water authority,
- state agencies, and
- tribal governments

INELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

As defined in [MCA 85-1-102\(6\)\(a\)](#), "Private Person" means any individual, association, partnership, corporation, or other non-governmental entity that is not eligible for loans and grants under [MCA 85-1-605](#).

- Individuals/Private Person
- Associations
- Partnerships
- Corporations

Sponsorship

A government entity may sponsor a non-government entity for a Watershed Management Grant. The sponsor must submit the application and provide project oversight. Grant sponsors must have a material connection to the work being performed and are the legal party for purposes of project representation, negotiations, and communications. DNRC will require that a government entity sponsoring a grant for a non-government entity will provide an executed MOU as startup conditions. See **APPENDIX E: EXAMPLE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING** for example language.

ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

Grants will be awarded for planning efforts and capacity building activities identified in a strategic plan, that conserve, develop, manage, or preserve renewable resources. Approved grants shall be an instrument to enhance natural resource benefits.

Example **ELIGIBLE** project types in this program:

1. **Watershed Group Formation** (Maximum Grant Amount \$40,000)
Grant funding to establish a watershed group. A watershed group is a self-sustaining, non-regulatory, consensus-based group that is composed of a diverse array of stakeholders, which may include, but is not limited to, private property owners, non-profit organizations, federal, state, or local agencies, and tribes. Grant funds awarded in this category may fund development of bylaws, a mission statement, complete stakeholder outreach, and develop a strategic plan.
2. **Watershed Organization Strategic Plans** (Maximum Grant Amount \$25,000)
Strategic plans focus on the mission and goals of an organization that helps groups define the organization's priorities. Strategic planning is a process culminating in a 3-5 year planning document that addresses an organization's current state, identifies future goals, and can then be used to develop annual work plans. The Conservation District Bureau at DNRC has tools to assist CDs <https://dnrc.mt.gov/Conservation/Conservation-Programs/Conservation-Districts/cd-resource-documents>. The Montana Nonprofit Association provides resources for nonprofit organizations online: <https://www.mtnonprofit.org/>.
3. **Watershed Strategic Program or Initiative** (Maximum Grant Amount \$50,000)
Strategic programs or initiatives are identified in an organization's Strategic Plan. These programs or initiatives will need to be clearly tied to the organization's mission and align with the purpose of the Watershed Management Grants. Examples may include watershed group expansion, staff support of a Watershed Restoration Plan, staff time for project management or contracted services to prepare a Watershed Restoration Project Plan, staff time for project management to

oversee a non-point construction project, staff time to coordinate volunteers, purchase of materials for education and outreach.

4. **Hosting a Big Sky Watershed Corps Member** (Maximum Grant Amount \$8,000)
Grants will support a portion of the local host site cost share to support a Big Sky Watershed Corps member. This will be a one-time grant application and award and will require submission of a final report at the end of the BSWC term. MCC Fellows and interns are not eligible under this category, as they would be eligible under the other categories for staff time in Watershed Management Grants, and costs for their salaries are ongoing throughout the life of the project or grant.

INELIGIBLE PROJECTS

Watershed Management Grants will not fund projects or programs that are eligible for grant funds within another grant program in DNRC, such as other RRGL grants, Reclamation Development Grants, Aquatic Invasive Species Grants, etc.

ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

DNRC generally cannot reimburse expenses incurred prior to the DNRC grant award letter date.

DNRC may consider reimbursing project expenses the applicant has incurred prior to the award letter date on a case-by-case basis; however, DNRC cannot reimburse any costs incurred before July 1, 2023.

Example expenses ELIGIBLE for reimbursement in this program:

- Staff time (wage and fringe) for project management.
- Staff time (wage and fringe) and expenses for grant administration, reporting, and expense tracking.
- Expenses associated with stakeholder meetings.
- Contracted consultant expenses associated with monitoring, design, grant writing or development of natural resource management plans.
- Conferences or training for staff development.
- Materials.
- Equipment rental or purchase.
- Travel expenses must comply with the State of Montana Travel Policy.
- Purchases of goods, services or supplies must meet the Montana Procurement Act and/or local procurement regulations.

Eligible expenses must be approved by DNRC, tie directly to a DNRC-approved project scope, and be incurred within the grant period of performance.

INELIGIBLE EXPENSES

The following expense types are considered INELIGIBLE for reimbursement in this grant program.

- Program costs¹ and/or indirect costs
- Political lobbying or litigation
- Land or property acquisition
- Food or beverages
- Activities that limit lawful access to property ([MCA 85-1-602 \(4\)](#))

GRANT FUNDING LIMITS

Grant funding limits are based on project type.

Project Type	Maximum Grant Request Amount	Minimum Match Requirement	
		Local Government Entity	Non-Government Entity
Watershed Group Formation	\$40,000	None	At least 50% of total project cost
Watershed Organization Strategic Plans	\$25,000	None	At least 50% of total project cost
Watershed Strategic Program or Initiative	\$50,000	None	At least 50% of total project cost
Big Sky Watershed Corps Host Site Cost Share	\$8,000	None	At least 50% of total project cost

MATCH REQUIREMENT

Watershed Management Grants to a local government entity do not require financial match. However, DNRC is required to evaluate project applications' financial and technical feasibility which considers reasonable project costs and committed matching funds.

A 50% cost share is required for non-government entities, [MCA 85-1-614 \(b\)](#). Matching contributions may be in the form of in-kind services or cash from local, state or federal sources. However, all contributions must be targeted for expenditure on the project specifically identified in the application. Matching funds must be substantiated by accounting records and costs that would normally be

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- ¹ "Program costs" means non-reimbursable costs not directly related to the project. Program costs include but are not limited to: office rent that will be incurred whether or not the project is implemented; salaries of existing fully funded staff positions unless the work hours associated with the project are accounted for; or any other costs that pay for ongoing or general services of the applicant. For example: rent, utilities, licenses, reoccurring/regular meetings/newsletters (unrelated to planning or specific capacity development), staff time (unrelated to planning or specific capacity development), ongoing cost deemed necessary to continue business (operations).

considered eligible as meeting program requirements. See **APPENDIX A – TERMS** for more information regarding Match Requirements.

Eligible in-kind contributions are those project-specific contributions associated directly with project implementation. If your budget includes in-kind labor, always reference the source for your labor value estimate. It may be helpful to use the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics website to estimate labor values for Montana: https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_mt.htm.

PROJECT ELIGIBILITY AND RANKING

See **APPENDIX B - ELIGIBILITY AND RANKING** for more information. DNRC considers the following criteria for project eligibility and ranking:

- Potential for renewable resource benefits.
 - Applicant presents a clear mission statement tied to renewable resource benefits.
- Potential public benefits. Including implementation of the state water plan priorities.
 - Applicant presents goals that can correlate with reasonable public benefits.
- Technical feasibility of the proposed plan.
 - Thoroughness of the implementation plan and schedule.
 - Applications with a clear plan to complete grant activities within 2 years of award will be given priority.
- Financial feasibility of the proposed plan.
 - Financial feasibility considers the adequacy of the budget narrative submitted with the grant application.
 - Financial feasibility considers the committed match in relation to total project cost. Committed cash match will receive a higher preference than uncommitted match or in-kind match.
 - Financial need considers the ability of the project to be accomplished without assistance of the grants, to be given preference. Applicants can demonstrate that staff salaries are not paid through the organization's annual operating budget or other grant funds.
- The applicant's ability to manage a project as demonstrated in a clear grant management plan.
- Public and stakeholder support.
- DNRC is required to consider the geographic balance of private grants. Ranking preference will be granted to entities that have not received WMG funds in the prior biennium.

NOTIFICATION OF AWARD

DNRC will issue an award letter to successful applicants. The applicant will be responsible for providing documentation to DNRC to meet start-up conditions, including a procurement plan, within the timeframe identified in the award letter. Failure to meet start-up conditions within a 12-month period will result in a rescinded award.

DNRC generally cannot reimburse expenses incurred prior to the DNRC grant award letter date.

GRANT MANAGEMENT

Grant Agreement

DNRC grant recipients are required to enter into an agreement with the DNRC prior to requesting reimbursement for eligible project costs. State procurement law is required to be followed under this agreement.

Reimbursement & Reporting

DNRC requires grant recipients to provide progress reports when requesting reimbursement. See **APPENDIX D - REPORTING AND REIMBURSEMENT REQUIREMENTS** for additional details. DNRC requires that grant recipients submit requests for reimbursement using the state vendor invoice. In addition to the DNRC vendor invoice, the grant recipient will submit copies of all applicable invoices and/or receipts eligible for reimbursement. All reimbursement and reporting are submitted through Submittable, the online grant management system, at www.grants.dnrc.mt.gov.

Reporting and reimbursement information is provided on DNRC [Resources and Training](#) webpage.

Grant Closeout

DNRC grants require final reports, deliverables, and invoices in compliance with the agreement to process final reimbursement. Ten percent (10%) of the total grant will be withheld until the grant recipient has submitted an acceptable final report.

PROGRAM CONTACT

Melissa Downing
Watershed Management Grant
Program Manager
Phone: 406-444-0697
Email: melissa.downing@mt.gov

LEGAL AUTHORITY

Montana Code Annotated:
MCA [85-1-602, 605, 608, 609, 610](#)
Administrative Rules of Montana:
ARM [36.17.6](#)



WATERSHED MANAGEMENT GRANTS

Grant Application Worksheet

Applications must be submitted online through Submittable, DNRC's grant management platform: <https://grants.dnrc.mt.gov>

Applications are due January 10, 2025, by 5:00pm.

Please read the Program Application Guidelines before applying.

INSTRUCTIONS – USE THIS WORKSHEET AS A GUIDE

Applications must be submitted online in Submittable. This document depicts the application form and is intended as a worksheet. DNRC recommends applicants use this worksheet to compose their application responses and collect supporting documentation in advance of submitting an online application.

GRANT APPLICATION WORKSHEET

The pages that follow show the application form as it will appear in Submittable

Watershed Management Grant (WMG) Program Purpose

The Watershed Management Grant (WMG) Program goals are to provide financial support for the development and implementation of locally led watershed related planning and capacity building activities that conserve, develop, manage, or preserve state renewable resources. These goals are aligned with [Montana Code Annotated \(MCA\) Title 85, Chapter 1, Part 6](#).

Eligible Activities

Grants will be awarded for planning efforts and capacity building activities identified in a strategic plan, that conserve, develop, manage, or preserve renewable resources. Approved grants shall be an instrument to enhance renewable resources.

HOW TO APPLY

Do you need to add a collaborator to help complete the application? Find the "Invite Collaborators" link in the upper right-hand corner of the application form. Add email addresses to invite anyone you'd like to work with on your submission or application. They will receive an email invite to collaborate with you. Be sure to check your spam folders for emails from "Submittable".

Project Title (required)

Limit: 300 characters

The project name must include the applicant and project title. Example: Flathead Conservation District Erosion Control Strategic Project.

APPLICANT

Eligible Applicants:

- Government entities such as cities and towns, counties, conservation districts, school districts, state government, and Tribal governments.
- Non-government entities such as watershed groups and nonprofit organizations.

Applicant Name (required)

Do not use abbreviations. The applicant is the entity entering into a legal agreement with DNRC.

Ex: Lewis and Clark Conservation District

Sponsored Entity Name (required)

The name of the entity being sponsored (when applicable).

A government entity may sponsor a non-government entity for a Watershed Management Grant. The sponsor must submit the application and provide project oversight. Grant sponsors must have a material connection to the work being performed and are the legal party for purposes of project representation, negotiations, and communications.

DNRC will require that a government entity sponsoring a grant for a non-government entity will provide an executed MOU as startup conditions.

Ex: Rocky Mountain Watershed Group is sponsored by the Teton Conservation District (applicant).

AUTHORIZED CONTACT

First Name (required)

Last Name (required)

Person authorized to enter into a grant agreement with the State of Montana on behalf of the organization. In most cases, this is the elected official, e.g. Board Chair, Mayor, Director

Authorized Contact Title (required)

Authorized Contact Mailing Address (required)

Country (required)

Address (required)

Address Line 2

City (required)

State, Province, or Region (required)

Zip or Postal Code (required)

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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Authorized Contact Email (required)

Authorized Contact Phone (required)

PRIMARY CONTACT

First Name (required)

Last Name (required)

The person that will be responsible for managing the agreement with DNRC for the proposed project.

Primary Contact Address

Country

Address

Address Line 2

City

State, Province, or Region

Zip or Postal Code

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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Primary Contact Email (required)

Primary Contact Phone (required)

ORGANIZATIONAL AND PROPOSAL INFORMATION

Organization Mission and Purpose (required)

Briefly describe the organization's mission and purpose. The organization's mission statement must be clear and directly relate to renewable resource and public benefits.

Ranking based on presenting a clear mission statement that can be directly related to renewable resource benefits.

Select your Project Type (required)

- ☐ Watershed Group Formation (\$40,000 max award)*
- ☐ Watershed Organization Strategic Plans (\$25,000 max award)*
- ☐ Watershed Strategic Program or Initiative (\$50,000 max award)*
- ☐ Big Sky Watershed Corps Host Site Cost Share (\$8,000/member max award)*

***Additional questions specific to each selection follow on Pages 11-16.**

WATERSHED GROUP FORMATION – ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

Questions on this page (Pg 11) will appear only if “Watershed Group Formation” for Project Type.

Watershed Group Formation

Grant funding to establish a watershed group. A watershed group is a self-sustaining, non-regulatory, consensus-based group that is composed of a diverse array of stakeholders, which may include, but is not limited to, private property owners, non-profit organizations, federal, state, or local agencies, and tribes. Grant funds awarded in this category may fund development of bylaws, a mission statement, complete stakeholder outreach, and develop a strategic plan.

Proposal Abstract (required)

Provide a brief (1 paragraph) summary of the proposed project. The proposal abstract includes the following:

1. Present a clearly defined problem and demonstrates need.
2. Clearly describe organization or project goals and objectives that will address the need.
3. Identify deliverables.

Ranking based on the following:

Applicant presents organizational goals that can clearly relate to public benefits.

Application presents a clearly defined problem and demonstrates a need.

Application clearly describes the project goals, objectives and identifies deliverables.

Goals and objectives of the project align with the applicant's mission statement

Watershed Name (required)

Provide the watershed name that is the focus of the proposal. Lookup the Watershed Names here:

https://mslservices.mt.gov/Geographic_Information/Maps/Watershed/Default.aspx

County (required)

Select the county where the primary activities will occur.

WATERSHED ORGANIZATION STRATEGIC PLANS – ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

Questions on this page (Pg 12) will appear only if “Watershed Organization Strategic Plans” is selected for Project Type.

Watershed Organization Strategic Plans

Strategic plans focus on the mission and goals of an organization that helps groups define the organization’s priorities. Strategic planning is a process culminating in a 3-5 year planning document that addresses an organization's current state, identifies future goals, and can then be used to develop annual work plans.

The Conservation District Bureau at DNRC has tools to assist CDs:

<https://dnrc.mt.gov/Conservation/Conservation-Programs/Conservation-Districts/cd-resourcedocuments>

The Montana Nonprofit Association provides resources for nonprofit organizations online:

<https://www.mtnonprofit.org/>.

Proposal Abstract (required)

Provide a brief (1 paragraph) summary of the proposed project. The proposal abstract includes the following:

1. Present a clearly defined problem and demonstrates need.
2. Clearly describe organization or project goals and objectives that will address the need.
3. Identify deliverables.

Ranking based on the following:

Applicant presents organizational goals that can clearly relate to public benefits.

Application presents a clearly defined problem and demonstrates a need.

Application clearly describes the project goals, objectives and identifies deliverables.

Goals and objectives of the project align with the applicant's mission statement

Watershed Name (required)

Provide the watershed name that is the focus of the proposal. Lookup the Watershed Names here:

https://mslservices.mt.gov/Geographic_Information/Maps/Watershed/Default.aspx

County (required)

Select the county where the primary activities will occur.

WATERSHED STRATEGIC PROGRAM OR INITIATIVE – ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

Questions on Pages 13 & 14 will appear only if “Watershed Strategic Program or Initiative” is selected for Project Type.

Watershed Strategic Program or Initiative

Strategic programs or initiatives are identified in an organization’s Strategic Plan. These programs or initiatives will need to be clearly tied to the organization’s mission and align with the purpose of the Watershed Management Grants. Examples may include watershed group expansion, staff support of a Watershed Restoration Plan, staff time for project management or contracted services to prepare a Watershed Restoration Project Plan, staff time for project management to oversee a non-point construction project, staff time to coordinate volunteers, purchase of materials for education and outreach.

Proposal Abstract (required)

Provide a brief (1 paragraph) summary of the proposed project. The proposal abstract includes the following:

1. Present a clearly defined problem and demonstrates need.
2. Clearly describe organization or project goals and objectives that will address the need.
3. Identify deliverables.

Ranking based on the following:

Applicant presents organizational goals that can clearly relate to public benefits.

Application presents a clearly defined problem and demonstrates a need.

Application clearly describes the project goals, objectives and identifies deliverables.

Goals and objectives of the project align with the applicant's mission statement

Watershed Name (required)

Provide the watershed name that is the focus of the proposal. Lookup the Watershed Names here:

https://mslservices.mt.gov/Geographic_Information/Maps/Watershed/Default.aspx

County (required)

Select the county where the primary activities will occur.

WATERSHED STRATEGIC PROGRAM OR INITIATIVE – ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

(Continued from Page 13)

Strategic Plan Upload (required)

Choose File

Upload a file. No files have been attached yet.

Acceptable file types: .doc, .docx, .pdf, .gif, .jpg, .jpeg, .png

Strategic Plans must be finalized and dated.

Strategic programs or initiatives are identified in an organization's Strategic Plan. These programs or initiatives will need to be clearly tied to the organization's mission and align with the purpose of the Watershed Management Grants.

Strategic Program or Initiative - Identify (required)

Strategic programs or initiatives are identified in an organization's Strategic Plan. How do the goals and objectives of this WMG application tie to the Organization's Strategic Plan? Please cite the section of the Organization's Strategic Plan that prioritizes the program or initiative that is included in this WMG application.

Program: is an ongoing, organized effort to provide a service or support a need.

Initiative: is a project to achieve a specific goal or purpose.

Does the project implement activities identified in a Watershed Restoration Plan?

Does the project implement activities identified in a Watershed Restoration Plan? Indicate yes or no.

If yes, provide a link to the WRP and cite the appropriate section.

Example Bitterroot WRP - Section 3: Priority Streams (pp14-56); Section 7: Monitoring (pp 65-68).

Strategic Plan Upload (required)

Choose File

Upload a file. No files have been attached yet.

Acceptable file types: .csv, .doc, .docx, .odt, .pdf, .rtf, .txt, .wpd, .wps, .gif, .jpg, .jpeg, .png, .svg, .tif, .tiff

BIG SKY WATERSHED CORPS HOST SITE COST SHARE – ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

Questions on this page (Page 15) will appear only if “Big Sky Watershed Corps Host Site Cost Share” is selected for Project Type.

Big Sky Watershed Corps Member Host Site Cost Share

Grants will support a portion of the local host site cost share to support a Big Sky Watershed Corps member. This will be a one-time grant application and award and will require submission of a final report at the end of the BSWC term.

MCC Fellows and interns are not eligible under this category, as they would be eligible under the other categories for staff time in Watershed Management Grants, and costs for their salaries are ongoing throughout the life of the project or grant.

Proposal Abstract (required)

Provide a brief (1 paragraph) summary of the proposed project. The proposal abstract includes the following:

1. Present a clearly defined problem and demonstrates need.
2. Clearly describe organization or project goals and objectives that will address the need.
3. Identify deliverables.

Ranking based on the following:

Applicant presents organizational goals that can clearly relate to public benefits.

Application presents a clearly defined problem and demonstrates a need.

Application clearly describes the project goals, objectives and identifies deliverables.

Goals and objectives of the project align with the applicant's mission statement

Watershed Name (required)

Provide the watershed name that is the focus of the proposal. Lookup the Watershed Names here:

https://mslservices.mt.gov/Geographic_Information/Maps/Watershed/Default.aspx

County (required)

Select the county where the primary activities will occur.

Please upload a copy of the Montana Conservation Corps BSWC host site application. (required)

Choose File

Upload a file. No files have been attached yet.

Acceptable file types: .doc, .docx, .pdf, .gif, .jpg, .jpeg, .png

END OF SPECIAL QUESTIONS for PROJECT TYPES

All applicants will answer the sections that follow.

PROJECT DETAILS (SCOPE, SCHEDULE, BUDGET)

Scope of Work – Technical Feasibility (required)

The scope of work describes the work (i.e., the project or program) that the applicant will be performing with Watershed Management Grant Program funds.

Tasks must tie to the goals and objectives of the organization and align with the Watershed Management Grant Program.

In addition the scope of work should include a general timeline for the applicant to meet the milestones or deliverables that can be used to measure success.

The scope of work informs the project budget, schedule and the inputs from the regulatory agencies and/or project partners.

Overall, the scope of work should show that the grant funds are being used to carry out the purpose of the Watershed Management Grant Program and articulate that the applicant understands the program eligibility requirements.

Ranking based on: Grant funded activities result in renewable resource and public benefits.

The implementation plan and schedule is clear, thorough and adequate to address the items listed in the scope of work which will be completed within 2 years of award date.

Schedule (required)

Provide a schedule that addresses the milestones identified in the Scope of Work and the month and year those will be accomplished.

Ranking based on: Applications that provide a clear plan to complete grant activities within 2 years of award will be given priority.

BUDGET – FINANCIAL FEASIBILITY

Eligible Expenses

DNRC grants reimburse eligible project costs:

- Staff time (wage and fringe) for project management.
- Staff time (wage and fringe) and expenses for grant administration, reporting, and expense tracking.

- Expenses associated with stakeholder meetings.
- Contracted consultant expenses associated with monitoring, design, grant writing or development of renewable resource management plans.
- Conferences or training for staff development.
- Equipment rental or purchase.
- Travel expenses must comply with the State of Montana Travel Policy.
- Purchases of materials, goods, services or supplies must meet the Montana Procurement Act and/or local procurement regulations.

Ineligible Activities

Watershed Management Grants will not fund projects or programs that are eligible for grant funds within another grant program in DNRC, such as other RRGL grants, Reclamation Development Grants, Aquatic Invasive Species Grants, etc.

Ineligible Expenses

- Program Costs aka indirect costs
- Political lobbying or litigation
- Land or property acquisition
- Food or beverages
- Activities that limit lawful access to property (see [MCA 85-1-602 \(4\)](#))

Match Requirements

Watershed Management Grants to a local government entity do not require financial match. However, DNRC is required to evaluate project applications' financial and technical feasibility which considers reasonable project costs and committed matching funds.

A 50% cost share is required for non-government entities, [MCA 85-1-614 \(b\)](#). Matching contributions may be in the form of in-kind services or cash from local, state or federal sources. However, all contributions must be targeted for expenditure on the project specifically identified in the application. Matching funds must be substantiated by accounting records and costs that would normally be considered eligible as meeting program requirements.

Eligible in-kind contributions are those project-specific contributions associated directly with project implementation. If your budget includes in-kind labor, always reference the source for your labor value estimate. It may be helpful to use the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics website to estimate labor values for [Montana: https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_mt.htm](#).

Watershed Management Grant Request Amount (required)

\$ USD

This should match the WMG Amount total on your Project Budget and Budget Justification.

Total Match (required)

\$ USD

This should be the sum of the other sources of matching funds in the budget tables and budget justification.

Ranking based on: Match is considered in relation to total project cost. Committed cash match will receive a higher preference than uncommitted match or in-kind match.

Total Project Cost (required)

\$ USD

This should be the total of the WMG request and the total match. This should match both the budget table and budget justification.

Upload Project Budget (required)

Choose File

Upload a file. No files have been attached yet.

Acceptable file types: .csv, .doc, .docx, .odt, .pdf, .rtf, .txt, .wpd, .wpf, .gif, .jpg, .jpeg, .png, .svg, .tif, .tiff, .musx, .ppt, .pptx, .sib, .xls, .xlsx, .zip

The schedule and budget will be completed on the provided templates below, please fill out and upload into application.

- Fill out the [WMG Uniform Budget sheet](#)

Funding Sources:

Include all funding sources you plan on using for the proposed tasks and whether they are committed. If the funds are not committed, provide a brief explanation.

Ranking based on: Budget clearly identifies matching fund sources and provides letters of commitment to support matching funds.

Budget Justification (required)

Choose File

Upload a file. No files have been attached yet.

Acceptable file types: .csv, .doc, .docx, .odt, .pdf, .rtf, .txt, .wpd, .wpf, .epub, .key, .mobi, .mus, .musx, .ppt, .pptx, .sib, .xls, .xlsx, .zip

Explain and provide a narrative on how the dollar amounts provided in the WMG budget were calculated for each category.

[How to write a budget narrative.](#)

Ranking based on: Budget narrative is clear and adequately justifies the budget categories.

Application addresses the financial need for grant funds and can demonstrate that the project could not be accomplished without grant funds.

Budget request demonstrates that the applicant understands the WMG Program eligible activities and expenses.

Letters of Commitment (required)

Choose File

Select up to 15 files to attach. No files have been attached yet. You may add 15 more files.

Acceptable file types: .doc, .docx, .pdf, .jpg, .jpeg

For committed match sources, provide a letter of commitment that is specific to the amount of match, source of funds and specific budget tasks.

Ranking based on: Committed match is substantiated by letters of commitment that are specific to the amount of match, source, and activities.

Procurement Plan (required)

Please provide a short description of how the applicant will procure contracted services or materials/goods/supplies. If this has already been completed, please provide a short narrative description of the procurement process and confirm that there is an executed contract and task order that covers the planning efforts in this grant application.

[RRG Program Guidelines](#)**Procurement**

Grant recipients are responsible for ensuring any procurement using DNRC grant funds, or payments under procurement contracts using such funds are consistent with the procurement standards set forth in the Montana Procurement Act (Title 18, Chapter 4) and local procurement laws, rules, or policy. Grant recipients are responsible for determining the most appropriate instrument of procurement.

Procurement Plan

A procurement plan provides for free and open competition, transparency in transactions, comparability, and documentation of all procurement activities to demonstrate compliance with the Montana Procurement Act and local procurement laws, regulations and policies. The procurement plan should cite the steps a grant recipient will undergo to ensure that prior to requesting reimbursement, all project expenditures are eligible.

Procurement Documentation

Grant recipients must maintain records sufficient to detail the history of procurement. Records include, but are not necessarily limited to, the rationale for the method of procurement, selection of contract type, contractor selection or rejection, and basis for the contract price. This documentation may be requested and reviewed by DNRC in the course of grant monitoring activities or by independent auditors during an audit. Documents must be held for five years after the termination or expiration of the Grant Agreement.

WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PROGRAM CRITERIA

Renewable Resource and Public Benefits (required)

1. Describe the expected renewable resource benefits from the final project (how will outcomes conserve, develop, manage, or preserve renewable resources?).
2. Describe how the organizational goals can directly relate to public benefits.

What are renewable resource benefits? What are public benefits? [RRG Program Guidelines](#).

Ranking based on: Applicant provides a description of renewable resource benefits and public benefits that demonstrates clear understanding of the WMG Program purpose.

Stakeholder and Community Engagement (required)

1. Describe how activity(s) are locally led, demonstrate stakeholder, local landowner, and community involvement.
2. List stakeholder input through the development of the application.
3. The application materials demonstrate coordination of effort with partnerships or shared interest groups. Identified project partners must provide a letter of support.

Ranking based on: Public and stakeholder support

Letters of Support (required)

Choose File

Select up to 15 files to attach. No files have been attached yet. You may add 15 more files.

Acceptable file types: .csv, .doc, .docx, .odt, .pdf, .rtf, .txt, .wpd, .wpf, .jpg, .jpeg

Letters of support are specific to the activities listed in the application.

Upload Project Picture (required)

Choose File

Upload a file. No files have been attached yet.

Acceptable file types: .gif, .jpg, .jpeg, .png, .svg, .tif, .tiff

Upload Project Location Map (required)

Choose File

Upload a file. No files have been attached yet.

Acceptable file types: .csv, .doc, .docx, .odt, .pdf, .rtf, .txt, .wpd, .wpf, .gif, .jpg, .jpeg, .png, .svg, .tif, .tiff, .epub, .key, .mobi, .mus, .musx, .ppt, .pptx, .sib, .xls, .xlsx, .zip

Grant Management Plan and Organizational Capacity (required)

Demonstrate the team's ability to implement the project.

1. Identify key staff or project partners responsible for project management. Cite their credentials or experience that addresses their capabilities in project management.
2. Identify key staff or project partners responsible for grant management. Cite their credentials or experience that addresses their capabilities in grant management.
3. List other grants that applicant and/or sponsored organization have successfully managed in the last 5 years.
4. Describe how you will meet DNRC reporting requirements. See [RRGL Program Guidelines - Reporting and Reimbursement Requirements](#)

Ranking based on: The applicant's ability to manage a project as demonstrated in a well described grant management plan. Organization mission/purpose aligns with DNRC mission/purpose. Organizational structure and background are clear. If they're sponsored, the sponsor must submit the application and provide project oversight. Grant sponsor has a material connection to the work being

MONTANA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT (MEPA)

Select the statement that best describes the actual project activities. (required)

- ☐ Project planning, document development and capacity building activities. No disturbance to soils, water, or air.
- ☐ Monitoring or data collection only.
- ☐ Project work will create a new soil disturbance, may impact air or water quality, or will change the quantity of ground or surface water usage.**

****For this selection, you will be asked the following question:**

Upload Completed MEPA Checklist (required)

Choose File

Upload a file. No files have been attached yet.

Acceptable file types: .csv, .doc, .docx, .odt, .pdf, .rtf, .txt, .wpd, .wpf, .gif, .jpg, .jpeg, .png, .svg, .tif, .tiff, .ppt, .pptx, .sib, .xls, .xlsx, .zip

Download the MEPA Checklist Form, complete and upload. Checklist located here: [Checklist](#)

Additional Documents (Optional)

Choose File

Select up to 10 files to attach. No files have been attached yet. You may add 10 more files.

Acceptable file types: .csv, .doc, .docx, .odt, .pdf, .rtf, .txt, .wpd, .wpf, .gif, .jpg, .jpeg, .png, .svg, .tif, .tiff, .epub, .key, .mobi, .mus, .musx, .ppt, .pptx, .sib, .xls, .xlsx, .zip

Upload additional information and documentation below.

For example additional organizational documents (ex. by-laws, strategic plans.)

Upload Authorizing Statement (required)

Choose File

Select up to 2 files to attach. No files have been attached yet. You may add 2 more files.

Acceptable file types: .csv, .doc, .docx, .odt, .pdf, .rtf, .txt, .wpd, .wpf, .gif, .jpg, .jpeg, .png, .svg, .tif, .tiff, .epub, .key, .mobi, .mus, .musx, .ppt, .pptx, .sib, .xls, .xlsx, .zip

Upload the signed authorizing statement.

☐

Authorizing Statement: I have signed and submitted the Authorizing Statement. (required)

Your application will not be accepted without this document. Download the Authorizing Statement, complete and attach to this application. [DNRC Authorizing Statement Link](#)

☐

I certify that the information and the statements in this application are true, complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I certify that the project or activity as described in this application complies with all applicable state, local and federal laws and regulations. I certify that I have knowledge of and understand the content of this application and that I am fully authorized to apply to DNRC for the grant specified in the submitted materials. (required)

BEFORE YOU SUBMIT!

Please Note:

- The verification of receipt will only go to the email address associated with the person that registered for the Submittable account.
- Once you have completed your application, please click "Save" and "Submit".
- Can't Submit? Go back and look for missing information in the required fields "*".
- No confirmation email? Please log in to your Submittable Account and verify the email address on the account and check your junk mail folder.

Save Draft

Submit Form

APPENDIX A: TERMS

Amendment

An amendment is a formal modification to a grant agreement. It is written, signed by both DNRC and the subrecipient, and legally incorporated into the Grant Agreement.

Applicant

"Applicant" means the following who submit an application under the act, meeting the purposes and policies of the act pursuant to [85-1-601](#), MCA:

- (a) a local governmental or state governmental entity eligible under [85-1-605](#), MCA;
- (b) a tribal government eligible under [85-1-605](#), MCA; or
- (c) a private person that is an individual, association, partnership, corporation, or other governmental entity that is not eligible for loans and grants under [85-1-605](#), MCA.

Application

"Application" means an application for a renewable resource grant or loan submitted by an applicant in accordance with the act and the rules adopted pursuant to the act.

Authorized Person

The Authorized Person is the individual authorized to enter into a grant agreement with the State of Montana on behalf of the applicant entity. DNRC requires that applications be signed by an authorized representative of the applicant entity (for example, a mayor, county commissioner, board chair, district supervisor, etc.). Application forms CANNOT be signed by a different representative (for example the City Manager or Town Clerk), even if that representative has signing authority within the local government. This is because DNRC has no way of knowing who has signing authority within the local government entity. Additionally, DNRC needs to be confident that the authorized signatory can enter into a grant agreement in the future should the application be successful.

Awards

DNRC will issue an award letter to an applicant that contains information on the amount of the award as well as program requirements. DNRC may only authorize reimbursement of eligible project costs once a Grant Agreement has been executed. See Appendix C Award Letter Example. Award letters will detail:

- Total Grant Award
- Eligible Project Costs (Dates)
- Startup Requirements
- Match Requirements
- Procurement Requirements
- Program Specific Requirements/Limitations

Budget Categories

Budget categories for direct costs in a DNRC Grant Agreement may include Personnel Costs, Equipment, Contracted Services. Please see guidance on writing a budget narrative online:

<https://dnrc.mt.gov/docs/conservation/ARPA/Tools-and-Resources/How-to-Write-a-Budget-Narrative-ARPA.pdf>

Personnel Costs

Personnel Costs, also referred to as payroll charges, include compensation paid to employees as wages or salaries and related fringe benefit costs for services provided for the benefit of the grant award project during the term of the grant agreement. As with any cost attributed to the grant agreement, personnel costs must meet the general test of allowability in that the costs must be necessary, reasonable, and allocable to the award.

Personnel costs can be checked for reasonableness by comparing compensation with other organizations' pay for similar work, or if no similar work exists, with market salary standards. The charges must be consistent with other **payroll charges and organizational policies, and they must not be charged elsewhere to another award or function.**

Fringe benefit costs associated with payroll charges (such as the employer's portion of payroll taxes; health insurance premiums; workers' compensation insurance; contributions to retirement programs; and compensated absences such as vacation, holiday, military, and sick leave) are also allowable, provided the benefits are reasonable and required by law, employee agreement, or established policy of the grant recipient.

All salaries, wages, and benefits claimed as direct costs to grant awards must be based on the recipient's documented payroll records. Time and attendance records (including work schedules, calendars, and time sheets) may be used to document payroll charges. Please see DNRC CARDD Grant Reimbursement for Personnel Expenses Guide online: <https://dnrc.mt.gov/docs/conservation/CARDD-Training/DNRC-Reimbursement-for-Personnel-Services-Guide-Final.pdf>

Equipment

Equipment is defined as tangible property having a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost. Not all DNRC grant programs allow for the purchase of equipment. If it is permitted by the grant program, Program Managers will work with the applicant during the application process to determine the eligibility of equipment purchase. If the purchase of equipment is determined to be an allowable cost, it will be clearly noted in the grant agreement's budget table, and the grant recipient will be required to follow all state and local guidance related to the acquisition and disposition of the equipment.

Materials or Supplies

Materials or supplies are defined as purchases necessary to support the grant activities that do not meet the definition of equipment above and are generally less than \$5,000. Materials and supplies are not expected to have a useful life beyond the immediate needs of the project.

Contracted Services

The Contracted Services budget category includes costs incurred for services provided under contract in support of the award-funded project. Contracted services represent an actual **procurement**, or purchase, of services.

DNRC can allow reimbursement for local governments to provide their own labor, equipment, or materials under specific circumstances. Please see <https://dnrc.mt.gov/docs/conservation/ARPA/Tools-and-Resources/Non-DEQ-Project-Guidelines-FINAL.pdf>

The State of Montana requires that projects must be designed and inspected during construction by a Montana registered engineer and all land surveying projects must be performed by a Montana registered land surveyor Montana Code Annotated (MCA) 18-2-121.

Local Government Provides Labor and Equipment for Construction. Local governments must request authorization to use their own labor and equipment for construction projects.

Common types of these projects are canal/ditch conversion to pipe and canal lining.

- Procurement of materials must follow federal, state and/or local procurement laws, rules, and regulations.
- The entity must provide DNRC with documentation of similar projects constructed or must provide DNRC with the manpower and machinery available to complete the construction according to plans and specifications.
- Accurate expense records of labor and machinery used for construction must be kept and provided to DNRC for reimbursement.
- A licensed engineer or surveyor registered in Montana must be present for inspection and completion of the project (MCA 18-2-121).
- DNRC requires As-Builts that are certified by a licensed P.E. as part of the Final Reporting Requirements.

Grant Agreement

The Grant Agreement is a legally binding contract between DNRC and the Grant Recipient to allow DNRC to reimburse the Grant Recipient for approved project activities.

Grant Recipient

A Grant Recipient is the entity legally allowed to carry out project activities as part of a DNRC Grant Program.

Eligible Expenses (Allowable Costs)

To be considered allowable under a grant award, a project cost must, at a minimum, be allocable, reasonable, and necessary.

1. **Necessary** to accomplish the project objectives as described in the Grant Agreement and applicable industry or program standards.
2. **Reasonable** for proper and efficient performance and administration of the grant award. A cost is “reasonable” if, in its nature and amount, it does not exceed that which would be incurred by

a prudent person under the circumstances prevailing at the time the decision was made to incur the cost.

3. **Allocable** to the grant award. A cost is allocable to a particular cost objective if the goods or services involved are chargeable or assignable to the cost objective in accordance with the relative benefits received.

Additional general criteria for allowability of costs require that the cost also:

- Be authorized or not prohibited under state or local laws or regulations.
- Conform to any limitations or exclusions set forth in cost principles established by federal or state laws, terms and conditions of the grant agreement, or other governing regulations as to types or amounts of cost items.
- Be consistent with policies, regulations, and procedures that apply uniformly to both state grant awards and other activities of the grant recipient
- be accorded consistent treatment. A cost may not be assigned to the grant agreement as a direct cost if any other cost incurred for the same purpose in like circumstances has been allocated to another grant agreement or subaward;
- be determined in accordance with the grant recipient's accounting records;
- be adequately documented.

Ineligible Expenses

DNRC cannot reimburse expenses for:

1. *Program Costs or Indirect Costs*: These are non-reimbursable costs not directly related to the project. Program costs include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Office rent that will be incurred whether or not the project is implemented;
 - b. Salaries of existing fully funded staff positions unless the work-hours associated with the project are accounted for; or
 - c. Any other costs that pay for ongoing or general services of the applicant. These costs are incurred for a common or joint purpose benefitting the organization and are not readily assignable to the project objectives. These costs tend to be necessary for the operation of an organization as a whole and benefits are shared across all programs. Examples include:
 - Utilities
 - Operations and maintenance
 - Routine compliance monitoring expenses
 - Licenses, memberships, and subscriptions
 - Communications
 - Office equipment
 - Costs of recurring/regular meetings
 - Organizational newsletters,
2. Other ineligible project costs include:
 - a. Costs incurred outside the eligible term in the grant agreement
 - b. Political lobbying or litigation
 - c. Land or property acquisition
 - d. Food or beverages
 - e. Travel expenses that exceed the State of Montana Travel Policy
 - f. Activities that limit lawful access to property (see [MCA 85-1-602 \(4\)](#))

- g. Repayment of loans
- h. Prepayment of anticipated costs of future activities

Match

Match is the portion of project costs not paid with grant funds. It is usually the recipient's contribution or a third party's donated services or supplies. For grant awards that require match, the recipient must document, according to the terms of the Grant Agreement, that the match requirement has been met. Costs used to meet a match requirement must be allowable under the applicable cost principles and must meet program guidance and documentation requirements. Failure to properly record match expenses may result in the termination of the Grant Agreement or the withholding of grant reimbursements by DNRC until appropriate documentation is provided.

Match Requirements

Matching contributions may be in the form of **in-kind** or **cash** from local, state or federal sources. However, all contributions must be targeted for expenditure on the **project specifically identified in the application**.

Costs claimed as match must meet all the following criteria:

- Matching funds must be substantiated by accounting records;
- Be necessary and reasonable for the accomplishment of project objectives;
- Be considered eligible as meeting program requirements.

Cash Match (Hard Match)

Cash Match, also referred to as hard match, is the actual cash outlay contributed to the project by the subrecipient or third parties, such as project partners and beneficiaries.

In-kind Match (Soft Match)

Eligible in-kind contributions are those project-specific contributions associated directly with **project implementation**. In-kind Match, also referred to as soft match, is the value of **non-cash** contributions provided by grant recipients or third parties. In-kind contributions may be in the form of goods, labor, services, facilities, space, personnel, materials, or equipment calculated at **fair market value**. Note that third-party in-kind match contributions count toward satisfying a match requirement only when, if the party receiving the non-cash contributions were to pay for them, the payments would be allowable costs.

Donated Services - Volunteers

Volunteer services furnished by professional and technical personnel, consultants, and other skilled and unskilled labor may be counted as match if the service is an integral and necessary part of an approved subaward-funded project or program.

Values claimed for volunteer services must be consistent with costs of similar work performed in the subrecipient's organization or in the local labor market. If an entity does not have volunteer service rates readily available, an acceptable Montana-specific average cost per hour for unskilled volunteer services can be found at http://www.independentsector.org/volunteer_time.

Budgets including in-kind labor, always reference the source for your labor value estimate. It may be helpful to use the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics website to estimate labor values for Montana: https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_mt.htm.

If volunteer services are approved to be claimed as match, the recipient should maintain documentation on:

- Name of volunteers (who)
- Dates of volunteer work (when)
- Tasks completed by volunteers (what)
- Total hours worked by volunteers (how many), and
- Source of the labor or volunteer rate.

Donated Services

Other examples of donated services may include use of equipment, printing, website maintenance or server space, telephone services, transportation costs, or administrative or accounting services provided in support of the program. These donated services should be valued at the fair market value for the services or what the entity would have to pay for the services if they were not donated.

Donated Goods

A recipient may receive donations of supplies necessary to accomplish project goals, the reasonable value of which may be used for match requirements of the program. The value assessed must not exceed fair market value at the time of the donation. DNRC will require recipients to provide supporting documentation on basis for determining the value of donated goods claimed as match.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

This is an agreement between the eligible entity, or grant recipient and a non-eligible entity that must clearly spell out the roles and responsibilities of each party to ensure the success of the project activities as specified in the grant award. It must also clearly define the financial arrangement to ensure that DNRC grant funds are not disbursed to the non-eligible entity. Non-eligible entities may not be a beneficiary of DNRC grant funds. Appendix D: Example Memorandum of Understanding.

Pass-Through Entity

When a grant recipient transfers or subawards funds to another entity to incur project costs and execute the project activities, this is considered a pass-through or subrecipient agreement. DNRC grants generally do not allow for Grant Recipients to pass-through or subaward grant funds to a third party.

Procurement

Grant recipients are responsible for ensuring any procurement using DNRC grant funds, or payments under procurement contracts using such funds are consistent with the procurement standards set forth in the Montana Procurement Act (Title 18, Chapter 4) and local procurement laws, rules, or policy. Grant recipients are responsible for determining the most appropriate instrument of procurement. See Appendix E for State of Montana Procurement Limits and a Limited Solicitation Worksheet.

Procurement Plan

A procurement plan provides for free and open competition, transparency in transactions, comparability, and documentation of all procurement activities to demonstrate compliance with the Montana Procurement Act and local procurement laws, regulations and policies. The procurement plan should cite the steps a grant recipient will undergo to ensure that prior to requesting reimbursement, all project expenditures are eligible.

Procurement Documentation

Grant recipients must maintain records sufficient to detail the history of procurement. Records include, but are not necessarily limited to, the rationale for the method of procurement, selection of contract type, contractor selection or rejection, and basis for the contract price. This documentation may be requested and reviewed by DNRC in the course of grant monitoring activities or by independent auditors during an audit.

Documents must be held for five years after the termination or expiration of the Grant Agreement.

Reimbursement

DNRC reimburses eligible project costs on a **reimbursement basis**. To be eligible for reimbursement, costs must be incurred within the dates specified in the grant agreement. DNRC will only reimburse costs if they are included in the approved scope and budget in the executed grant agreement. Grant recipients must document eligible costs to receive reimbursement, which includes a progress report, copies of vendor invoices, completed budgets, documentation of match (if required) and DNRC may request proof of payment prior to authorizing reimbursement. See DNRC CARDD's Reimbursement Requirements Guide online: <https://dnrc.mt.gov/docs/conservation/CARDD-Training/DNRC-Reimbursement-Request-Guide-Complete.pdf>

Sponsor

Eligible entities may “sponsor” a grant on behalf of an entity that is not eligible to receive grant funds from DNRC. Eligible entities, or applicants, must have a material connection to the work being performed and are the legal party for purposes of project representation, negotiations, and communications. DNRC will require that a grant applicant sponsoring a grant for ineligible entity provide an executed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Appendix D: Example Memorandum of Understanding for example language.

APPENDIX B: ELIGIBILITY AND RANKING

The criteria for eligibility and ranking RRGL Grant Applications are established in ARM [36.17.610](#). Private grants have additional ranking considerations outlined in [MCA 85-1-609](#) and [MCA 85-1-610](#). For each grant cycle, DNRC will publish the guidelines to the eligibility and numerical points to be awarded for the following criteria:

ELIGIBILITY

Applicant Eligibility

- Local Government ([MCA 85-1-605](#)) - Project, Planning, Emergency, Irrigation Development, Watershed Management, Nonpoint Source Grants.
- Private Person (85-1-606) – Private, Irrigation Development, Watershed Management, and Nonpoint Source Grants.

Eligible Activities [MCA 85-1-602](#)

- Feasibility, design, research, and resource assessment studies.
- Preparation of construction, rehabilitation, or production plans.
- Construction, rehabilitation, production, education, or other implementation efforts.

Eligible Projects [MCA 85-1-602](#)

- Development of natural resource-based recreation;
- Development of natural, offstream, and tributary storage;
- Improvement of water use efficiency, including development of new, efficient water systems, rehabilitation of older, less efficient water systems, and acquisition and installation of measuring devices required under [85-2-113](#), MCA; monitoring; and development of state, tribal, and federal water projects;
- Water-related projects that improve water quality, including livestock containment facility projects, soil and range health projects, and the maintenance and repair of source watersheds;
- Water-related projects that improve water quantity, including streamflows and water storage in existing natural systems, such as riparian areas, flood plains, and wetlands;
- Advancement of farming practices that reduce agricultural chemical use; and
- Projects that facilitate the use of alternative renewable energy sources, as defined in [15-6-225](#), MCA.

RRGL Eligibility [ARM 36.17.610](#)

- Project must have renewable resource benefits – see Renewable Resource Benefits Ranking below.
- Project must result in public benefits – see Public Benefits Ranking below.
- Project is technically feasible:

- Adequate alternative analysis.
- Adequate cost estimate for the potential alternatives.
- Adequate cost estimate for the preferred alternative. ***Eligibility evaluates applicant's total project budget including committed cash match. Projects that fail to provide an adequate budget narrative to justify project costs may receive a reduced award or be ineligible for grant funds.*** Please see the guidance on how to write a budget narrative online: <https://dnrc.mt.gov/docs/conservation/ARPA/Tools-and-Resources/How-to-Write-a-Budget-Narrative-ARPA.pdf>
- Preferred alternative selection.
- Thoroughness and feasibility of the project's implementation plan and schedules.
- Quality of supporting technical data.
- Project Management Plan is adequate and can support the project:
 - Past management problems
 - Other concerns
- Project may NOT reduce, restrict, or prohibit any lawful access to the property that existed prior to the project's implementation.
- Project may NOT result in a long-term adverse impact to public benefits: land, air, water, fish, wildlife or recreation opportunities. [MCA 85-1-601](#)

RENEWABLE RESOURCE BENEFITS RANKING [ARM 36.17.610](#)

Points must be awarded for renewable resource benefits related to the project. If a project has no renewable resource benefits, it is ineligible for a grant.

Renewable Resources	Conserve	Develop	Manage	Preserve
Surface Water				
Ground Water				
Wind				
Renewable Energy				
Soil				
Wetlands				
Fish and Aquatic Habitat				
Wildlife Habitat				
Range Land				

Renewable Resources	Conserve	Develop	Manage	Preserve
Crop Land				
Forests				

Total Renewable Resource Score:

- "Conservation" means the promotion of efficient and/or sustainable use of a renewable resource.
- "Development" means a new beneficial and sustainable use of a renewable resource.
- "Management" means activities that improve governing entities' ability to control and administer a renewable resource.
- "Preservation" means the protection of a renewable resource from pollution, destruction, or neglect.
- "Renewable resource" means a sustainable natural resource including water, wind, renewable energy, soil, wetlands, fish and aquatic habitat, wildlife habitat, range land, crop land, and forests.

PUBLIC BENEFITS RANKING [ARM 36.17.610](#)

Points must be awarded for public benefits. If a project has no public benefits, it is ineligible for a grant.

Citizen Benefits	Common Well-Being (State's Natural Heritage)	Human Health or Safety*	Welfare (Economic)	Recreation
Applicant				
Local				
Regional				
Statewide				

Total Public Benefits Score:

Tie Breaker Points

Project Implements State Water Plan:

Project will Mitigate Human Health or Safety Problems*:

TOTAL PROJECT SCORE

Applications shall be assigned a net ranking score based on the points gained or lost. Once the applications have been ranked, DNRC creates a priority list of all of the applications.

PRIVATE GRANTS ELIGIBLE PROJECTS [MCA 85-1-609](#)

- Water-related project.
- Will promote, enhance, or advance the purpose (85-1-601), policies, and objectives (85-1-602) of the renewable resource grant and loan program; *See RRG Eligibility and Renewable Resource Benefits and Public Benefits Ranking.*
- Will be constructed, developed, and operated within the state of Montana; *Example, private grants are only available for a primary residence for a Montana resident.*
- Will be economically feasible. (A project is economically feasible if the project benefits exceed the project costs. The department shall consider only quantifiable benefits and costs in calculating economic feasibility.) *See the Public Benefits Ranking below.*
- Will be an efficient use of natural resources, including water, energy, land, and air. (An efficient use is one that minimizes waste.)
- Will provide multipurpose facilities to the extent practicable;
- Will comply with statutory and regulatory standards protecting the quality of resources such as air, water, land, fish, wildlife, and recreational opportunities;
- Will provide associated public benefits in addition to any private benefits the project may provide; and
- Is needed to accomplish the purpose for which the project is proposed;
- Applicant has adequate financial resources to construct, operate, and maintain the project. The department shall consider financial resources from any source for which the applicant has qualified, including a renewable resource grant or loan.
- Applicant holds or can acquire all necessary lands, other than public lands, and interests in the lands and water rights necessary for the construction, operation, and maintenance of the proposed project;
- Applicant is able and willing to enter into a contract with the department for construction or development of the proposed project.
- Applicant has committed match of 50% of total project cost MCA-85-1-614.

PRIVATE GRANTS – ADDITIONAL RANKING [MCA 85-1-610](#)

Renewable Resource Benefits Ranking [ARM 36.17.610](#)

Points must be awarded for renewable resource benefits related to the project. If a project has no renewable resource benefits, it is ineligible for a grant.

Renewable Resources	Conserve	Develop	Manage	Preserve
Surface Water	**		**	

Renewable Resources	Conserve	Develop	Manage	Preserve
Ground Water	**		**	
Wind				
Renewable Energy				
Soil				
Wetlands				
Fish and Aquatic Habitat				
Wildlife Habitat				
Range Land				
Crop Land				
Forests				

Total Renewable Resource Score:

- "Conservation" means the promotion of efficient and/or sustainable use of a renewable resource.
- "Development" means a new beneficial and sustainable use of a renewable resource.
- "Management" means activities that improve governing entities' ability to control and administer a renewable resource.
- "Preservation" means the protection of a renewable resource from pollution, destruction, or neglect.
- "Renewable resource" means a sustainable natural resource including water, wind, renewable energy, soil, wetlands, fish and aquatic habitat, wildlife habitat, range land, crop land, and forests.

*Additional Points **Manage and Conserve Water Resources:*

The extent to which the project will effectively utilize water resources and promote the conservation and efficient use of the water resource must be evaluated and considered. *Example: Renewable Resource Benefits for Conservation and Management of Water Resources will have higher points than the other renewable resource benefits.*

Public Benefits Ranking [ARM 36.17.610](#)

Points must be awarded for public benefits. If a project has no public benefits, it is ineligible for a grant. The extent and desirability of the public benefits that will be provided must be considered. [MCA 85-1-610](#)

Citizen Benefits / Extent and Desirability	Common Well-Being (State's Natural Heritage)	Human Health or Safety*	Welfare (Economic)	Recreation
Applicant				
Local				
Regional				
Statewide				
Desirability				

Total Public Benefits Score:

PRIVATE GRANTS - ADDITIONAL POINTS [MCA 85-1-610](#)

Family Farm Preference:

A water-related project that will be used as part of a family farm must be given preference. A family farm is one devoted primarily to agriculture under the ownership and operation of a resident Montana family.

State Reservation of Waters:

A water-related project that will utilize or develop water reserved under 85-2-316 must be given preference.

Geographic Balance:

The department, to the extent practicable, shall attempt to achieve geographic balance in the promotion of renewable resource grant and loan projects through the awarding of loans and grants to private persons. *Example, applicant has not received a DNRC grant in the past biennium.*

Financial Need:

Projects that could not be accomplished without the assistance of a grant must be given preference. *Example: the applicant can provide financial information demonstrating the need for the grant funds to complete the project. Additionally, this precludes income properties from receiving private grants for septic replacement or upgrades.*

PRIVATE GRANTS - TOTAL PROJECT SCORE

Applications shall be assigned a net ranking score based on the points gained or lost. Once the applications have been ranked, DNRC creates a priority list of all applications.

APPENDIX C: AWARD LETTER EXAMPLE

GRANT RECIPIENT ORGANIZATION
ADDRESS
CITY, MT ZIP

RE: DNRC Renewable Resource Grants Award Letter PROJECT TITLE

Dear AUTHORIZED PERSON:

Congratulations on receiving your RRGL PROGRAM grant for \$AWARD AMOUNT for the PROJECT TITLE.

Project costs incurred (AS OF THE DATE OF THIS LETTER) or (INCURRED AFTER JULY 1, 2023, BUT BEFORE JULY 1, 2024) may be eligible for reimbursement. Before DNRC can reimburse eligible project expenses, GRANT RECIPIENT ORGANIZATION must enter into an executed grant agreement with DNRC. DNRC requires the following Startup Conditions to draft a grant agreement. Startup conditions are due within (12-MONTHS) or (24 MONTHS) of the date of this letter. Failure to meet the deadline to submit startup conditions may result in DNRC rescinding this grant award.

Startup Conditions:

- Updated Scope
- Updated Schedule ([PDF Schedule](#))
- Updated Budget ([Uniform Budget Status of Funds Tracker](#))
- Commitment Letters for Matching Funds
- Grant Management Plan ([Document](#))
- Memorandum of Understanding (if required)
- Procurement Plan (if required)

APPLICANT ORGANIZATION must enter into a grant agreement with DNRC prior to requesting reimbursement for eligible project costs.

OPTIONAL Program Specific Requirements:

- Match Requirements (Private Grants)
- Limited Solicitation Worksheet
- Project Kickoff Meeting
- Progress Meetings
- Eligible Project Cost Limitations

Please contact me if you have any questions. I am looking forward to working with you on your project.

Sincerely,
GRANT MANAGER

Cc: PROJECT CONTACT
PROJECT ENGINEER

APPENDIX D: REPORTING AND REIMBURSEMENT REQUIREMENTS

PROGRESS REPORTS

The Recipient will provide progress reports to DNRC during the term of the grant agreement. Reports will provide status information for each project implementation task and identify the reporting period. Status information will include, at a minimum:

- Project activities during the reporting period;
- Costs incurred;
- Funds remaining;
- Anticipated activities during the next reporting period, and
- Expected changes in scope, schedule, or budget.

The Recipient shall report on total project costs including those funded by the Recipient and other matching funds. Significant problems encountered shall be noted and necessary scope and timeline modifications requested.

Grant recipients must submit a project progress report with each reimbursement request, at a minimum on a quarterly basis. DNRC will not honor claims for reimbursement if DNRC has not approved the progress report or if there is a delinquent report.

REIMBURSEMENT REQUEST REQUIREMENTS

Reimbursement requests must:

- Include a State of Montana vendor invoice signed by an authorized agent.
- Be billed by the tasks identified in the project scope of work and budget.
- Be supported by backup documentation of contractor invoices, receipts, cancelled checks, or other documentation of costs.

Recipient invoices need to relate clearly to the scope of work and budget in the grant agreement.

Projects with multiple funding sources need to submit a uniform status of funds spreadsheet (provided by DNRC) or other means of tracking and documenting match and the project budget.

All reimbursement and reporting are submitted through the online grant management system

www.grants.dnrc.mt.gov.

Reporting and reimbursement templates and training materials are provided on DNRC [Resources and Training](#) webpage.

FINAL REPORT

The Recipient must submit one hard copy and one electronic copy (pdf) of the final report that meets the requirements of Attachment C to DNRC upon project completion. Final disbursement of funds is contingent upon DNRC receipt and approval of a final report that meets these requirements. Final reports must be submitted to DNRC within 90 days of the Agreement termination date.

Final reports must include a signed Certificate of Compliance to DNRC upon project completion. Projects that included construction must also submit a signed Engineer's Statement of Completion. DNRC may also request as-built drawings for construction projects, IF APPLICABLE TO PROJECT.

The Recipient is not required to use the suggested format in this Attachment but must include the information listed below. At a minimum, the final report must describe the purpose and location of the project, project tasks, changes to the scope, schedule or budget, how the project met stated goals and objectives, how the project benefited and/or developed renewable resources, and the current project status. Final reports will be made available to the public on the DNRC website.

Final Report Requirements

1. Title Page:

- a. Recipient's name, address, and telephone numbers.
- b. DNRC Grant Agreement Number
- c. Name, address, and telephone of other contacts if primary contacts are not available.
- d. Funding: total project cost and amount of agreement
- e. State where copies of the report may be obtained (Recipient contact person name, address, phone number. An email address or website is acceptable).
- f. A list of supporting documents (for example, construction completion reports or other project deliverables, if applicable).

2. Introduction: Describe the project history, location, and purpose. Provide a project location map.

3. Discussion and Results:

- a. Describe how project goals and tasks identified in the Agreement were completed:
 - Describe the planning process (for example: discuss project design, independent review, coordination with agencies, permits required and other activities).
 - Describe how each task listed in the scope of work was accomplished. Provide details on each task (for example: if trees were planted as an erosion control measure, state how many, the tree species, the age or size of the trees, and location of the plantings).
 - List the goals and/or objectives of the project as stated in the scope of work and briefly describe how they were met by the activities described in the tasks above. Discuss any differences between project goals and objectives and actual project results.
 - Provide an explanation for tasks that were not completed or any out-of-scope work.
 - Include a project map, data, and/or photos that document the project.
- b. Summarize any problems encountered and solutions adopted. What would you do differently?

4. Resource and Public Benefits: Describe the project's overall benefits. What are the anticipated and realized benefits to resources and to the local and regional area of the completed project? Were these benefits realized? If not, explain why.

5. Grant Agreement Administration and Project Costs:

- a. Work schedule: Compare the time allotted for project completion with the actual schedule. Identify delays and discuss the reasons for delays.
 - b. Budget: Include a table that summarizes how the monies were spent by budget category or task as described in Attachment B and funding source (i.e. DNRC, Sponsor, other State or federal agencies). Explain cost overruns or savings. Discuss unbudgeted expenses that arose over the course of the project.
 - c. Match Funds: Identify all funds from other sources or in-kind services that were used to fund the project. If not all matching funds were spent provide a justification.
- 6. Project Completion and Certification:**
- a. Recipient's Certificate of Compliance (must be signed for all projects).
 - b. As Built Drawings, if requested by the DNRC (construction projects only).
 - c. Engineer's Statement of Final Completion (if applicable).
 - d. Deliverables: List here if any.
- 7. Final Report submitted electronically (PDF)**

Reporting and reimbursement templates and training materials are provided on DNRC [Resources and Training](#) webpage.

APPENDIX E: EXAMPLE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Note: This example should not simply be copied. It is only provided as an example to help create an agreement between a local government entity and project partner organization or subrecipient that is to be reviewed and approved by all parties and their attorney's.

THIS CONTRACT is entered into by (Insert Name of LOCAL GOVERNMENT), herein referred to as "LOCAL GOVERNMENT", and the (Insert Name of PARTNER ORGANIZATION), herein referred to as "PARTNER ORGANIZATION".

WITNESSETH THAT:

WHEREAS, the LOCAL GOVERNMENT is the recipient of a DNRC grant to PROJECT NAME (describe the Project) owned and operated by the PARTNER ORGANIZATION; and

WHEREAS, this Contract between the LOCAL GOVERNMENT and the PARTNER ORGANIZATION will enable them to enhance cooperation in implementing the LOCAL GOVERNMENT's DNRC award to accomplish the above-described project; and

WHEREAS, the LOCAL GOVERNMENT, in its capacity as a DNRC grantee, has determined that the PARTNER ORGANIZATION can better supervise the design and construction phases of the PROJECT NAME; and

WHEREAS, the DNRC has required the LOCAL GOVERNMENT to enter into a contract with the PARTNER ORGANIZATION specifying the terms and conditions of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT's delegation of certain DNRC grant management responsibilities to the PARTNER ORGANIZATION; and

WHEREAS, both parties to this Contract understand that neither local government involved herein has in any way, expressly or implied, abrogated any of its individual powers, and that this Contract does not create any new organization or legal entity.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND THE PARTNER ORGANIZATION MUTUALLY AGREE AS FOLLOWS:

- I. Responsibilities Delegated to the PARTNER ORGANIZATION
 - A. The PARTNER ORGANIZATION will, subject to prior approval by the Board of LOCAL GOVERNMENT Commissioners/Directors, retain the services of a consulting engineering firm to design and supervise the construction of the project.
 - B. The PARTNER ORGANIZATION will be responsible for all facets of the design and construction phases of the project, including the following:
 - 1. Design engineering;
 - 2. Construction engineering;

3. Except as provided by paragraph IV. Administration below, compliance with all applicable state and federal requirements;
 4. Except as provided by paragraph IV. Administration below, compliance with all other state and federal requirements as described in the DNRC Grant Agreement;
 5. Preparation of construction bid documents; and
 6. Supervision of the bid process, the awarding of construction contracts, and construction of the project. The selection of the project contractor will be subject to the ratification of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT Board of Commissioners/directors and bid solicitation documents will reflect this requirement.
- C. The PARTNER ORGANIZATION and its consulting engineer will receive, review, and approve all requests for payment for the items contained in paragraph B, above, and prepare and submit such requests to the LOCAL GOVERNMENT Board of Commissioners/directors in a timely fashion in accordance with established procedures.
 - D. During the term of this Contract, the PARTNER ORGANIZATION will maintain reasonable records of its performance hereunder in a manner consistent with generally accepted accounting principles. The PARTNER ORGANIZATION will allow the LOCAL GOVERNMENT and DNRC and their authorized representatives access to these records at any time during normal business hours. At the request of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT, the PARTNER ORGANIZATION will submit to the LOCAL GOVERNMENT, in the format prescribed by the LOCAL GOVERNMENT, status reports on its performance under this Contract.
 - E. The PARTNER ORGANIZATION will provide documentation that the local share of the project that exceeds DNRC funds may be accessed by the LOCAL GOVERNMENT for the project no later than the time of construction bid award.
- II. Payment of Design and Construction Costs Incurred by the PARTNER ORGANIZATION

In consideration of the PARTNER ORGANIZATION's acceptance of the responsibilities described in paragraph I, above, the LOCAL GOVERNMENT agrees to the following:

- A. Upon receipt of a valid claim for payment from the PARTNER ORGANIZATION for allowable project costs as specified in the LOCAL GOVERNMENT's grant agreement with DNRC, a copy of which is appended as Attachment A of this Contract, and which by this reference is made a part hereof, the LOCAL GOVERNMENT will request the required amount of grant funds from DNRC and upon receipt of these funds, the LOCAL GOVERNMENT will honor the PARTNER ORGANIZATION's claim and pay the engineer or contractor accordingly. ***(Note: Be sure to specify clearly that grant funds can be reimbursed directly to contractors and not to entities ineligible to receive DNRC grant funds.)***
- B. Each payment for engineering and construction costs will be drawn from DNRC and PARTNER ORGANIZATION funds (if applicable) in amounts that are proportionate to the percentage that such funds represent of the total cost of the project as specified in Exhibit B of Attachment A.
- C. The LOCAL GOVERNMENT will deduct a retainage from each payment request equal to five percent of the request, submitted by the PARTNER ORGANIZATION for construction costs incurred by the project contractor and hold this retainage until construction is completed, the engineer approves

final payment, and the project is accepted, all in accordance with the conditions of the construction contract. **(Note: A retainage requirement is optional.)**

- D. The LOCAL GOVERNMENT will also withhold one percent of the amount of any claim submitted by the contractor and will forward this amount to the Montana Department of Revenue pursuant to section 15-50-206(2), MCA.
- E. The LOCAL GOVERNMENT may refuse to pay any claim which it deems not valid under the terms of the DNRC grant agreement (Attachment A). Any agreement between a DNRC grantee and a partner organization or subrecipient, such as a water or sewer district, should include a "Scope of Work" which includes a description of the work to be performed, a schedule for completing the work, and a budget. (These items are standard components of any DNRC grant agreement which is referred to here as an attachment.)

III. Duration of the Contract

- A. This Contract takes effect when the following conditions are satisfied:
 - 1. DNRC and the LOCAL GOVERNMENT Board of Commissioners/directors have executed the DNRC grant agreement;
 - 2. The LOCAL GOVERNMENT Attorney and the attorney for the PARTNER ORGANIZATION have approved this Contract as to form and content; and
 - 3. The LOCAL GOVERNMENT Board of Commissioners/directors and the PARTNER ORGANIZATION's governing body have each reviewed this Contract and agreed fully to its terms and conditions.
- B. This Contract will terminate 90 days after the project engineer files a certificate of completion of the project with the Montana Department of Environmental Quality and Department closes out the DNRC project with the LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

IV. Administration

For purposes of implementing the joint undertaking established by this Contract, the LOCAL GOVERNMENT's Board of Commissioners and the PARTNER ORGANIZATION's Board of Directors hereby agree to coordinate with the LOCAL GOVERNMENT's DNRC grant agreement liaison, the project engineer, and a designated representative of the PARTNER ORGANIZATION. These individuals may meet on a regular basis during the term of the DNRC project to provide for the efficient and effective implementation of this project.

V. Management of Real Property or Equipment Acquired

The primary purpose of this Contract is to allow the LOCAL GOVERNMENT to delegate responsibility for the design and construction of the PARTNER ORGANIZATION's project to the PARTNER ORGANIZATION and to define the procedures by which the LOCAL GOVERNMENT will disburse DNRC funds to pay the costs incurred as a result of these activities. The PARTNER ORGANIZATION's facilities will be constructed or improved as described in the DNRC grant agreement (Attachment A) and the PARTNER ORGANIZATION may continue to own and operate those facilities subject to the limitations contained in subparagraph B.

Upon the expiration of this Contract the PARTNER ORGANIZATION will transfer to the LOCAL GOVERNMENT any DNRC funds on hand at the time of expiration and any accounts receivable attributable to the use of DNRC funds.

VI. Indemnification

The PARTNER ORGANIZATION waives any and all claims and recourse against the LOCAL GOVERNMENT, including the right of contribution for loss or damage to persons or property arising from, growing out of or in any way connected with or incident to the PARTNER ORGANIZATION's performance of this Contract except claims arising from the concurrent or sole negligence of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT or its officers, agents, or employees. The PARTNER ORGANIZATION will indemnify, hold harmless, and defend the LOCAL GOVERNMENT against any and all claims, demands, damages, costs, expenses, or liability arising out of the PARTNER ORGANIZATION's performance of this Contract except for liability arising out of the concurrent or sole negligence of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT or its officer's agents, or employees.

VII. Suspension and Termination

The LOCAL GOVERNMENT may suspend or terminate this Contract if the PARTNER ORGANIZATION materially fails to comply with any term of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT's grant agreement with DNRC. In addition, the LOCAL GOVERNMENT may terminate this Contract for convenience with reasonable notice. This Contract has been approved by the LOCAL GOVERNMENT's Board of Commissioners and the PARTNER ORGANIZATION's Board of Directors.

(Name of LOCAL GOVERNMENT) Commissioners

_____Chairman

Date: _____

_____Commissioner

Date: _____

_____Commissioner

Date: _____

APPENDIX F: PROCUREMENT LIMITS - LIMITED SOLICITATION WORKSHEET

When considering which rules to follow (state, federal or local requirements), grant recipients must comply with the most restrictive requirements. The information below is guidance only and is static. It does not constitute legal advice.

	State of Montana		
	<i>Goods & Services MCA Title 18, Chapter 4</i>	<i>Construction MCA Title 18, Chapter 4</i>	<i>Licensed Professional Services MCA Title 18, Chapter 8</i>
\$250,000 +	Competitive Invitation for Bid (IFB) or Request for Proposals (RFP) Award to lowest responsive bidder	Competitive Invitation for Bid (IFB) Award to lowest responsive bidder	Request for Qualifications (RFQ) Award to most qualified & negotiate rate
\$100,000 - \$250,000			
\$50,000 - \$100,000	Limited Solicitation Minimum of 3 Quotes Award to lowest responsive bidder	Limited Solicitation Minimum of 3 Quotes Award to lowest responsive bidder	Direct negotiation Rotate vendors
\$10,000 - \$50,000			
\$0 - \$10,000	Direct negotiation No Quotes Rotate vendors	Direct negotiation No Quotes Rotate vendors	

*IFB = Invitation for Bid AKA Sealed Bids (Construction)

*RFP = Request for Proposals AKA Competitive Proposals (Goods or Services)

*Limited Solicitation AKA Small Purchases = 3 or more written or oral quotes

**RFQ = Request for Qualifications (Professional Services)

Direct negotiation, micro purchases = no bidding required

LIMITED SOLICITATION / SMALL PURCHASE WORKSHEET

Grant Recipient: _____
 Project Name: _____
 Grant Agreement #: _____

<u>PRODUCT/WORK DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>BRAND/MODEL (Equipment)</u>		
	Vendor 1	Vendor 2	Vendor 3
Vendor Name	1.	1.	1.
Contact Person	2.	2.	2.
Phone/Email	3.	3.	3.
Date of Outreach	4.	4.	4.
Price Quoted			
Vendor Awarded*			

Three attempts to contact can be considered a quote price of “no response” and no additional attempts are required.

*Work should be awarded to the most cost-effective option that can provide the work/supplies required. Items such as shipping charges and travel distances should be included in determination of the most cost-effective option.