



Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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DEM ANNOUNCES AVAILABILITY OF \$1.2M IN EPA GRANT FUNDING FOR PROJECTS TO IMPROVE WATER QUALITY IN WATERSHEDS

PROVIDENCE, RI – The Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (DEM) is announcing the availability of \$1.2 million in federal [Clean Water Act](#) grants are available for local projects to restore water quality and abate nonpoint source pollution. Local, state and regional governmental agencies, as well as public schools, universities, and non-profit watershed, environmental or conservation organizations, and 501(c)3 non-profit organizations with the capacity to carry-out eligible projects such as urban neighborhood associations are eligible to apply for the grants.



Nonquit Pond in Tiverton is one of the eligible watersheds for matching grants for projects to improve water quality and aquatic habitat.

Public Workshop (Hybrid)

A public hybrid workshop will be offered on Thursday, Nov. 30, 2023 at 10 AM on Zoom and in-person at [DEM's Providence Headquarters](#), 235 Promenade Street, Room 300 (third floor), Providence, Rhode Island 02908. To register for the workshop on Zoom, [click here](#).

Nonpoint source pollution arises from many diverse sources, such as uncontrolled storm water runoff, pet waste, cesspools and failing septic systems, erosion due to land disturbances and other stressors, including aquatic invasive species. [DEM's NPS Management Program](#) works to prevent or reduce negative impacts to Rhode Island's water resources. These funds target specific watersheds (see below) as well as eligible disadvantaged communities. These competitive grants will be awarded according to the [Request for Proposals \(RFP\)](#) and require a match commitment.

Eligible watersheds:

- *Watersheds with Approved Watershed Plans*
 - [Bristol – Kickemuit River Watershed](#)
 - [Barrington - Palmer-Warren Rivers Watershed](#)
 - [Buckeye Brook Watershed](#)
 - [Jamestown Brook Watershed](#)
 - [Nonquit Pond Watershed](#)
 - [Narrow River Watershed](#)
 - [Stafford Pond Watershed](#)
 - [Tiverton/Mount Hope Bay Watershed](#)
 - [Watson Reservoir Watershed](#)
 - [Wood-Pawcatuck Rivers Watershed](#)

- *Watersheds with Draft Watershed Plans*
 - Other watersheds that have a draft watershed plan at the time of grant proposal submission and commit to having that plan finalized (including EPA approval) by the end of calendar year 2023.

- *Flexibility for Projects in Environmental Justice Areas/Disadvantaged Communities (EJ/DAC)*
 - EPA has issued interim guidance that provides flexibility to allow both the development of watershed plans in disadvantaged communities as well as implementation of community demonstration projects that address known sources of NPS water quality impairment. This flexibility opens the door to potential projects in certain portions of the state that currently lack an approved watershed plan. Applicants should reference one or more of these tools for identifying EJ/DAC areas in their applications:
 - [DEM’s Environmental Justice Initiative and Interactive Map](#)
 - [EPA’s Environmental Justice Tool \(EJScreen\)](#)
 - [Rhode Island Clean Water State Revolving Fund \(CWSRF\) Intended Use Plan – Affordability Criteria](#) (to qualify, must be identified as Tier 1 or Tier 2 in Table 3 on Page 20 of the Intended Use Plan).

Proposals for projects that will be completed by Sept. 2024 can apply for expedited review. DEM will announce the award of fast-tracked projects on a rolling basis between through Feb. 2024. Proposals for projects to be completed over the next 1-3 years will be awarded in the spring of 2024. All projects must be submitted to DEM no later than 4 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 26, 2024 through the State of Rhode Island’s [Grant Management System](#) (eCivis). Resources for subrecipients (grantees) and user guides for eCivis can be found on the Grants Management Office website.

For more information on DEM programs and initiatives, visit www.dem.ri.gov. Follow [DEM on Facebook](#), Twitter (@RhodeIslandDEM), or Instagram (@rhodeisland.dem) for timely updates.

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