Request for Proposals

March 25, 2026

Applications are requested for proposals to implement approved watershed management plans and address nonpoint source pollution.

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NONPOINT SOURCE (NPS) PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS

Introduction

Michigan's NPS Program assists state, federal, and local partners to restore water bodies impaired by polluted runoff and other categories of NPS pollution as well as protecting high quality waters from NPS pollution impacts. The basis of the program is watershed management; therefore, we are requesting proposals that will implement the priority NPS recommendations in critical areas defined in approved watershed management plans.

Planning Activities

General updates of existing watershed management plans and the development of new watershed management plans are not eligible activities under this Request for Proposals (RFP). However, in very limited cases, a task for technical revisions of an existing recently approved watershed management plan can be added to an implementation project (see Appendix A).

The activities required for the development of engineered site plans and pre dam removal planning are also eligible under this RFP. However, proposals including site planning and pre-dam removal planning must include an implementation element. Eligible planning type activities might include site assessment, modeling, and design work.

Funding

Sources and Availability

This RFP contains information concerning both federal and state funding sources. Federal funds are authorized under the federal Clean Water Act and state funds are from the Renew Michigan Fund. A total of approximately $3.1 million may be available. This includes up to $2.35 million in federal funds and $750,000 in state funds. Funds should be available for selected projects after October 1, 2026. Grant awards are contingent upon the enactment of sufficient funding in the fiscal year (FY) 2026 federal and state budgets to support this grant program as well as any other necessary approvals.

Minimum and Maximum Funding Amounts

The minimum request is $25,000 in grant funds. There is no maximum request. The NPS Program encourages comprehensive implementation projects that will result in restoration of impaired waters or the long-term protection of high-quality waters.

Required Match

The minimum required local match is 25 percent of the project total which is equivalent to one third of the grant request. Local match may include cash and/or in-kind services from non-federal sources.

Eligibility

Eligible Applicants

Non-federal units of government (state agencies, counties, cities, townships, and villages), regional planning agencies, conservation districts, public and private colleges and universities, and incorporated nonprofit organizations who are exempt from taxation under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Tribal entities, with an up-to-date U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA)-approved Tribal NPS management program plan (see Appendix B), are also eligible. In addition, all applicants must:

- Supply proof of a successful financial audit for a period ending within the 24 months immediately preceding the release date of this Request for Proposals as demonstrated by an *Independent Auditor's Report* signed by a Certified Public Accountant from a Comprehensive Annual Report. The audit must be of the applicant organization – **No fiduciary arrangements will be accepted.** The applicant organization should, at a minimum, include enough staff time to adequately administer the project including attendance at project meetings, and the review and submittal of project products and reporting. **Note:** The audit date is based on the audit period and not the date of the audit or the audit letter. To be eligible under this RFP the end date of the audited period must be after **March 25, 2024**.
- Be in good standing with Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) programs. Within the 24 months immediately preceding the release of this RFP:
  - No EGLE grant terminated for cause.
  - No demonstrated inability to sign a contract in a timely fashion, manage a grant, or meet the obligations in a project contract with EGLE.
- Not appear on the federal Debarment and Suspension List. The list can be searched through the federal System for Award and Management.
- Successful applicants and all contractors will be required to certify they are not an Iran--based business as defined in MCL 129.312.

Ineligible Applicants

Federal agencies, individuals and groups without nonprofit status under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, and entities without proof of a successful audit within the 24 months preceding the release of this RFP. However, these entities can serve as project partners or receive grant funds as subcontractors to eligible grantees.

Eligible Activities and Types of Projects

Projects implementing NPS based priority recommendations in approved watershed management plans or USEPA-approved Tribal NPS Management Program Plans are eligible. This eligibility includes physical, vegetative, and managerial best management practices (BMP), protection practices (e.g. zoning and conservation easements), information and outreach activities, effectiveness monitoring, and monitoring associated with a technical watershed management plan update. These activities must directly address the NPS pollutants, causes, and sources identified as priorities in the watershed management or USEPA-approved Tribal NPS management program plan. The pollutants, causes, and sources addressed in implementation projects must also be consistent with Michigan's NPS Program Plan.

Permits: Some eligible activities may require permits from EGLE. Appendix C of this RFP contains additional information concerning the types of activities that may require a permit and the information needed by EGLE to help make this determination. An application for a grant does not constitute a permit application, nor does a grant award signify EGLE approval for an activity requiring a permit.

Ineligible Activities

The following types of activities will not be considered for funding:

- Activities that are required or will be required under a permit, required in a court or enforcement order, or required by law.
- Maintenance practices (repair or replacement of existing infrastructure). However, the additional cost of upgrades to existing structures for water quality improvement is eligible (for example, replacing an existing culvert with a free span bridge, or repaving using pervious pavement).
- Land acquisition (land purchase in fee simple).
- Construction or operation of septage facilities, sanitary sewer, or traditional municipal storm sewer collection systems (this includes installing catch basin inserts and other practices between the inlet catch basin and outlet of an existing stormwater collection system).
- Purchasing capacity at an existing wastewater treatment plant.
- Point source-related projects.
- Addressing the symptom but not the source of NPS pollution (including, but not limited to lake aeration, weed harvesting, alum or biochar treatments, dredging, sand traps and other instream treatments).
- Addressing issues not included in Michigan's NPS Program Plan (e.g., atmospheric inputs or contaminated sediments).
- Development of, or other work related to, wetland or stormwater mitigation banks. BMPs installed with NPS grant funding or used as match cannot be used to generate credits in mitigation or trading programs.
- Projects that negatively impact any water resource.
- Development or general updates of watershed management plans.

Eligible Areas

- Critical or priority areas covered by a watershed management plan approved by EGLE as meeting the USEPA's "Nine Minimum Elements of Watershed Management Planning" on or before March 18, 2026. The list of currently approved and pending watershed plans is available on the NPS Program Web site.
- Areas included in USEPA-approved Tribal NPS management program plans

General Requirements for All Proposals

1. Project timelines cannot exceed three (3) years.
2. The Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Parts 200 and 1500) will apply to all awards.
3. To be consistent with USEPA's policy, "Timely Obligation, Award and Expenditure of USEPA Grant Funds", applicants must be able to enter a grant agreement with EGLE within 90 days of a grant award. EGLE retains the right to withdraw funding if a contract has not been signed within 90 days of awarding funding.
4. Outreach, informational, and educational products including all publications, media releases, social media, and electronic presentations must:
    - Meet current Americans with Disabilities Act best practices for publications and web content. Suggested resources include:
        - The National Center on Disability Access Education - Accessibility handouts geared toward publications.
        - WebAIM - Resources for accessible digital content.
    - Be consistent with the copyright clauses in the EGLE boilerplate.
    - Be consistent with the Nonpoint Source Program's Acknowledgement Guidance.
    - Be reviewed and approved by NPS Program staff prior to use.
5. Announcements and Public or Media Events:
    - Announcements through the web or print materials for workshops, conferences, or other events as part of a project must follow the NPS Program Acknowledgement Guidance.
    - The EGLE Project Administrator must be notified at least 15 working days prior to any public or media events related to the project to provide the opportunity for attendance and participation by state and federal representatives.
6. Projects must address specific, high-priority NPS recommendations in either of the following and include in the Project Description Section A (see Instructions) reference(s) to the specific recommendations proposed for implementation.:

    - A watershed management plan approved by EGLE as meeting both state and federal criteria (See Appendix A), or

- A USEPA-approved Tribal NPS management program plan (see Appendix B)

7. Proposals implementing BMPs must include the targeted load reduction from the watershed management plan and the projected pollutant load reduction of the project in the Project Description (Sections B and G) for each targeted pollutant.
8. Proposals must include, as a separate attachment (one page maximum) or as part of the Project Description (Section A), a statement on the status of the implementation of the watershed management plan. The statement should summarize past and ongoing actions and discuss progress in terms of the priorities of the plan and how the proposed work fits into the overall plan implementation strategy and priorities.

Guidance for Proposals within the Coastal Nonpoint Boundary

As a condition of Michigan's Coastal Nonpoint Pollution Control Program (Section 6217 of the federal Coastal Zone Act Reauthorization Amendments [CZARA]), EGLE has agreed to prioritize specific activities within Michigan's Coastal Nonpoint Boundary. Applicants should refer to Appendix D to determine if this guidance applies to their proposal.

Project Specific Proposal Requirements

Signage Requirements

- Signage is required at all construction sites easily viewable by the general public.
- Construction site and informational signage installed as an outreach component must follow the NPS Program Acknowledgement Guidance.

Invasive Species Control

All projects selected for funding will be required to take steps to minimize the risk of spreading terrestrial and aquatic invasive species. Selection of project-appropriate measures should be dependent on the type of work being conducted and the specific situation. Additional information is available from NPS Program staff.

Implementing Physical BMPs

- Proposals to implement physical BMPs with NPS program funds or used as match *must* include specific locations and BMP information utilizing a BMP form and site plans (See exceptions for On-Site Wastewater Treatment System proposals; certain agricultural practices; and some outreach and education proposals – for these exceptions, the BMP and BMP location must be approved by NPS staff prior to implementation. The locations, costs, and load reductions must be reported prior to grant close out).

- Applicants must submit site plans for any vegetative or structural practices, including any earth change activities, physical modifications of the stream channel, or practices that modify hydrology. Site plans are a depiction of each project area

showing all existing water bodies (including designated flood plains and wetlands), structures, and on-site conditions as well as the proposed treatment. For the proposal, conceptual site plans will suffice. However, prior to implementing a BMP, engineered site plans prepared by a licensed professional engineer, licensed landscape architect, or other professional working under a licensed engineer's authority, must be submitted to and approved by an NPS Program engineer when the BMP will be installed with NPS funds or used as match. Applicants must include review and approval of the engineered site plans by a NPS engineer as a work plan task and in the project timeline.

- Applicants proposing to take a phased approach to implementation (due to project cost, access, or other reason) must understand that obtaining funding for one phase does not guarantee funding for additional phases of implementation. Also, most often, implementation should be approached in an upstream to downstream fashion, not a piecemeal or partial implementation approach. Full implementation from upstream to downstream will maximize the benefit to the entire watershed while minimizing disturbance to streambanks and stream channel, increasing project success.
- Applicants must include a task to obtain all federal, tribal, state, and local permits that may be needed to complete the work plan. Include a list of permits that will be obtained prior to BMP implementation as part of the task (an Environmental Permit Information checklist is available from EGLE).
- Projects that will affect stream flow, including any potential upstream and downstream impacts from BMP implementation, must include a hydrologic analysis (see Appendix E).
- EGLE reserves the right to work with applicants to select new sites or BMPs, or cancel a grant award in whole, or in part, if prior to implementation, EGLE determines that the proposed sites or BMPs are not viable or will not meet the proposal outcomes or program priorities.
- Proposals that implement physical BMPs to address active/known localized sources of NPS pollution in high quality waters must describe the basis for selecting the site(s) in terms of measurable water quality improvements. Priority will be given to those proposals utilizing upstream/downstream monitoring or assessment as justification.
- Proposals that will utilize NPS funds for technical and staff support and implement BMPs using other sources of funding (Farm Bill for example) will not have to provide specific locations and BMPs at the proposal stage. Rather, such proposals must include a description of the methodology that will be used to target the pollutants/causes/sources and critical areas of the applicable watershed management plan. Applicants should be aware that if selected for funding:

    - BMPs must be designed and installed according to recognized standards (The Natural Resources Conservation Service Field Office Technical Guide, EGLE NPS Best Management Practices Manual, or Statewide Low Impact Development (LID) manual for example).

- Projects will be required to report on the location, costs, and load reductions for each installed BMP, even if another funding source was utilized.
- Proposals that incorporate adjustments for recent meteorologic data and increasing storm intensity will be more competitive. EGLE currently recommends a 10 percent (10%) to 30 percent (30%) increase to runoff and treatment volumes above the design standards for each site. The design standards may differ based on location. Additional information is available from NPS staff.

Land Protection

Land protection projects prevent NPS pollution due to land use changes that may impact water quality. Past land protection projects have included actions such as local ordinance development and permanent conservation easements.

- Projects must be primarily based on preventing future water quality impacts from nonpoint source pollution but may also consider secondary factors such as endangered species.
- Applicants must provide reporting measures directly related to the watershed management plan goals and water quality conditions addressed by the proposal. For example, a proposal intended to address phosphorus and sediment impacts to designated uses must project phosphorus and sediment loads that will be avoided by the proposed project.
- Proposed conservation easements must be selected based on potential water quality benefits and must permanently protect the proposed area.
- NPS Program staff will inspect all proposed easement sites prior to signing a grant contract.
- Proposals including conservation easements that will be paid for or used to match NPS Program funds must provide maps and aerial images showing each parcel of interest overlain with a proposed easement boundary.

Wetland Restoration or Protection

Proposals that include restoration or protection of wetlands in watersheds with a complete Landscape Level Watershed Functional Assessment (LLWFA) must use the tool to identify specific wetlands to address the water quality concerns and critical areas identified in the watershed plan. Proposals in areas without an LLWFA must include the rationale or methodology used to select specific wetlands for restoration or protection. Details can be found in Appendix F.

Infiltration Practices

Infiltration of stormwater runoff is necessary to provide stable and healthy lakes and streams and is strongly encouraged by EGLE. However, sufficient site characterization is needed to ensure these practices will function properly and not cause unintended environmental problems by impacting existing or creating new areas of soil and groundwater contamination. For additional information about the following requirements

for infiltration practices please contact Dale Ehinger, NPS Unit, Great Lakes Watersheds Assessment, Restoration, and Management Section (GLWARMS), Water Resources Division (WRD) at EhingerD@Michigan.gov or 269-716-8305; or Matthew Herman, NPS Unit, GLWARMS, WRD at HermanM2@Michigan.gov or 517-512-5928.

Projects including infiltration BMPs **must**, as part of the application:

- Note any known on-site conditions that would impede infiltration.
- Conduct a background check of the BMP location(s) and adjacent properties to determine the potential for leaking underground storage tanks, past or present contamination, that the site is not registered as a known contaminated site, or other soil/groundwater concerns in the area (such as drinking water wells, roads, and structures). For guidance see the Due Diligence section of the Part 201 Citizens Guide, Baseline Environmental Assessments (BEA) (PDF).
- Provide a soil boring log, or equivalent method of soil characterization for each location.
    - Each boring must be to a depth of an impermeable layer (including bedrock), water table, or a minimum of four feet below the bottom of each proposed practice.
    - Using the Unified Soil Classification System or equivalent, note grain size distribution percentages, moisture, color, odors, and staining for each infiltration BMP location.
- Provide an estimated size of the contributing area for each BMP and indicate this area on the site plan.

Infiltration Practice Design:

- Subsurface findings must be incorporated into the site plans.
- It must be demonstrated that infiltration practices will not exacerbate known sources of groundwater or soil contamination.
- Infiltration practices should have four feet or more of appropriate soils between the bottom of the practice and an impermeable layer or the water table.

Where known sources of contamination exist as defined by Part 201, Environmental Remediation; or Part 213, Leaking Underground Storage Tanks, of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act 1994 PA 451, as amended, additional design features may be necessary to prevent exacerbating on-site contamination. Applicants proposing infiltration practices near areas of contamination will be asked to show that the practice does not increase the magnitude or extent of the contamination.

Rain gardens

The NPS Program recommends the use of mature plants over the use of plugs and discourages the use of seeds to establish the rain garden plantings.

Dams and Dam Removal

- Eligible Activities:
    - Stream channel restoration or stabilization practices following, or performed in conjunction with, dam removal.

The following activities are also eligible when the full proposal includes an implementation element.
    - Engineering designs for dam deconstruction and stream restoration.
    - Characterization and/or quantification of reservoir sediment to generate the removal design.
    - Pre- and post-removal monitoring, especially to assess sediment and hydrologic impacts or biological changes.
- Ineligible Activities:
    - Construction or deconstruction of dam structures or associated infrastructure.
    - Stabilization or removal of contaminated sediments.
- Additional information on Dams and Dam Removal is available on the EGLE Dam Safety and Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) Dam Management web sites.

Projects within MS4 Phase II Stormwater Areas

Activities that are above and beyond permit requirements are eligible for funding. However, the proposal must clearly identify permit requirements and the activities for which grant funding is being requested, or which will be used as match. Additional information on Phase II requirements and a list of Michigan's Phase II (Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System [MS4]) stormwater communities can be found on the Municipal Stormwater Program Web site. Applicants invited to submit full proposals will be required to assert that projects in MS4 communities meet the criteria described in the USEPA's supplemental guidance: "Watersheds In and Near Metropolitan Areas – Preventing, Reducing, and/or Eliminating Impacts Associated with Urban Runoff." (Appendix G). Examples and further discussion of stormwater BMP eligibility can be found in Appendix G.1.

On-Site Wastewater Treatment Systems

It is a long-term goal of the NPS Program to protect and restore waters of the state through control of discharges from inadequately functioning on-site wastewater treatment systems. Proposals targeting these efforts through the implementation of watershed management plans may be eligible for funding. Specific guidance for the use of NPS grants for addressing on-site wastewater treatment systems can be found in Appendix H and the Nonpoint Source Program Septic Repair or Replacement Minimum Standards.

Due to human health concerns, the NPS Program will allow an exception to the requirements regarding identification of specific locations, BMPs, and site plans for proposals to identify and correct failed or failing on-site wastewater treatment systems under the following conditions:

- The proposal meets all of the requirements in Appendix H.
- The proposal will include a methodology for addressing sites ineligible for (i.e., cheater pipes), or in excess of NPS funding.

Agricultural Practices

Specific locations for the following practices are not required to be included in proposals:

- Cover crops
- Tillage practices
- Filter strips
- Drainage water management practices

Proposals that include landowner letters of support and/or specific locations will be favored over proposals that do not provide this information. In addition, location, cost, and load reduction information will be required for all practices installed as part of an NPS funded project.

Outreach and Education

Outreach and education efforts must focus on the targeted audiences, critical areas, and priority pollutants identified in the approved watershed management plan or USEPA-approved Tribal NPS management program plan.

Typically, before and after surveys utilizing the Social Indicator Data Management and Analysis tool are used to measure the impact of an outreach campaign. Results of the "pre" survey should be used to refine proposed outreach message and methods. Additional information can be found in Appendix I.

- Grant funds for outreach and education efforts are limited to $200,000. Match contributions are not limited.
- Site locations for BMPs installed as a training or education effort do not need to be specified in the proposal. Selected sites must be appropriate for the BMP being demonstrated and the BMP must follow NPS design standards. Sites and engineered site plans (where required) must be reviewed and approved by EGLE prior to installation and a BMP form is required upon completion.

Project Evaluation

All projects must include an evaluation component to determine the success of the project activities in relation to the stated project goals. It is important to consider the scale of change that will result from your project during the project period (site specific, stream reach, sub-basin or larger) when selecting evaluation methods. While measurable environmental or social change is the preferred standard, other means of assessment such as modeling may also be acceptable depending on the project type, products and/or goals.

Monitoring and Quality Assurance Project Plans (QAPP)

Projects that collect physical, chemical, biological, or social information for evaluation or project guidance will be required to submit a QAPP for approval by EGLE. A QAPP is not needed for the proposal phase and a QAPP development task is eligible for grant reimbursement or for use as match.

Projects that propose monitoring to determine the status of designated uses will be required to meet or exceed the state's sampling protocols, so the state can decide on

designated use support using project data. This requirement does not apply to other monitoring that might be proposed as part of the project, such as pollutant source identification monitoring.

Guidance for environmental monitoring and associated QAPPs is available on the NPS Program website. Applicants proposing to perform environmental measurements (water quality, macroinvertebrate populations, stream morphology, etc.) must complete an environmental monitoring table (see Instructions) and include it in Section F of the Project Description. Applicants are encouraged to contact Caroline Keson, NPS Unit, GLWARMS, WRD, at KesonC1@Michigan.gov or 517-512-0892 prior to submitting a proposal including environmental monitoring.

Guidance for social monitoring and evaluation and associated QAPPs is available on the NPS Program website. Applicants proposing to measure social change (i.e., a social survey) must complete a social monitoring table (see Instructions) and include it in Section F of the Project Description. Applicants are encouraged to contact Robert Sweet or Autumn Mitchell, NPS Unit, GLWARMS, WRD, at SweetR@Michigan.gov - 517-512-9765; or MitchellA24@Michigan.gov - 517-388-6662 respectively, prior to submitting a proposal including social monitoring. Additional information on social monitoring is in Appendix I.

Project Outcomes

Restoration projects

Should be designed to meet one or more of the following outcomes:

1. Result in measurable improvements that meet the USEPA strategic targets, Sub-objective 2.1.
    i. Fully restore water bodies that are not attaining designated uses due to NPS causes.
    ii. Remove at least one specific cause of impairment from water bodies that are not attaining designated uses due to NPS causes.
    iii. Improve water quality in 12-digit hydrologic unit code subwatershed(s), meaning that one or more of the impairment causes are removed for at least 40 percent of the subwatershed.
2. Result in measurable improvements in water quality in water bodies that are not meeting designated uses due to NPS causes.
3. Achieve or make substantial progress toward achieving the NPS load reduction targets of an approved Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) or an approved watershed management plan in areas where a TMDL has not been developed.

Protection projects

Should be designed to meet one or more of the following outcomes:

1. Result in measurable water quality improvement at NPS impacted sites in high quality watersheds.
2. Result in the protection of substantial acreage that is deemed to be important for protecting water quality resources (i.e. water frontage, lakes, groundwater) and/or demonstrates retained water quality.

3. Achieve or make substantial progress toward achieving the land use protection targets of an approved watershed management plan. This can include perfecting permanent conservation easements or enacting changes to local ordinances or zoning.

Outreach and Education projects

Should be designed to meet the following outcome:

1. Result in measurable change in one or more social indicators (e.g., awareness, behavior, knowledge) for targeted audiences in critical areas and focused on priority pollutants from the approved watershed management plan.

Areas of NPS Program Emphasis

Phosphorus Load Reductions from the Western Lake Erie Basin

The NPS Program is encouraging projects that make substantial progress toward achieving the Annex 4 goal of reducing both soluble reactive phosphorus and total phosphorus entering the western and central basins of Lake Erie by 40 percent (40%). "Substantial progress" is defined as an anticipated 40 percent (40%) or higher reduction in phosphorus on a per site basis as predicted by modeling (for example, the USEPA Pollutant Load Estimation Tool), design performance, or other method.

LID and Green Infrastructure

The NPS Program is encouraging projects that utilize LID and Green Infrastructure (GI) to address water quality and quantity issues including in areas serviced by combined sewers. Requirements, priorities, and additional information for LID and GI proposals are located in Appendix J.

Agricultural Practices

Targeted and comprehensive approach to farm conservation planning: To be considered a priority for funding, agricultural BMPs must be implemented in a comprehensive manner and targeted to critical areas of the watershed. Requirements, priorities, and additional information for comprehensive agricultural proposals are located in Appendix K.

Funding Priorities

Proposals meeting the criteria for Tier 1 will be considered for funding first. Tier 2 projects may be selected over Tier 1 projects based on the projected project outcomes. Tier 3 proposals will be considered last.

Tier 1

Projects for any eligible water body that meet one or more of the following outcomes or Areas of NPS Program Emphasis:

- Restoration of impaired water bodies (Restoration Projects 1.i.).
- Removal of at least one specific cause of impairment from an impaired water body (Restoration Projects 1.ii.).
- Measurable water quality improvements in impaired water bodies or watersheds (Restoration Projects 1.iii. or 2.).

- Measurable water quality improvement or demonstration of retained water quality at NPS-impacted sites in high quality watersheds (Protection Projects 1. or 2.).
- Achieve or make substantial progress toward achieving the land use protection goals of an approved watershed management plan through permanent easements or changes to local ordinances/zoning (Protection Projects 3.).
- Phosphorus load reductions from the Western Lake Erie Basin, LID, Green Infrastructure, and agricultural projects consistent with the areas of program emphasis above with additional details in appendices J and K.

Tier 2

Projects for any eligible water body that:

- Achieve or make substantial progress toward the NPS load reduction target of an approved TMDL or watershed management plan (Restoration Projects 3.).
- Successful outreach and education campaign indicated by measurable change in social indicators (Outreach and Education Projects 1.).

Tier 3

Other NPS projects that are consistent with the eligibility criteria and the NPS Program Plan.

Site selection should follow the prioritized list or prioritization strategies in the watershed management plan and implementation should proceed in a logical manner. Projects that include specific sites with landowner letters of support will be more competitive than similar proposals that do not demonstrate landowner support.

Evaluation Criteria

- The anticipation that the project will result in a water body meeting one or more of its designated uses.
- The anticipated improvement or protection of water quality.
- The consistency of the project with the priorities identified in the watershed management plan or USEPA-approved Tribal NPS management program plan being implemented.
- Site specificity – proposals with site-specific information will be more competitive than proposals implementing practices over a defined area (proposals without specific sites identified).
- Demonstration that there is an identifiable source of funds for the future operation and maintenance of the proposed project.
- The anticipated water quality benefits of the project in relation to the cost (although a thorough cost/benefit analysis is not required).
- Whether the project provides water quality benefits to sources of drinking water.
- The ability of the applicant and the partners and contractors to carry out the project as demonstrated by previous NPS grants or submitted information.

- Financial and technical assistance from the partners in the project, as documented by letters of commitment.
- Financial and other resource contributions in excess of the required minimum match. *Note: The percent match listed in the proposal will be used in the project contract if the proposal is selected for funding.*
- All else being equal, preference will be given to entities with a higher proportion of requested grant funds devoted to direct costs.
- The balanced distribution of projects throughout the state as part of project selection.

Process, Schedule, and Deadlines

Notic of Intent (NOI): The NPS Program is requiring all applicants interested in funding through this RFP to electronically submit a NOI form for each proposed project. Following the NOI Instructions, submit all NOI forms in ***searchable*** PDF format to EGLE-NPSGrants@Michigan.gov before **11:59 p.m., Monday, April 27, 2026.** All forms are posted in a searchable PDF format and can be filled and signed electronically.

The EGLE-NPSGrants address should not be used for correspondence. All questions and comments should be sent directly to NPS Staff. EGLE will reply to all NOI forms submitted to the listed address. If you do not receive a reply within four hours during regular business hours, please contact Robert Sweet, NPS Unit, GLWARMS, WRD at SweetR@Michigan.gov or 517-512-9765; or Rob Selesky, NPS Unit, GLWARMS, WRD at SeleskyR1@Michigan.gov or 517-331-7690 for assistance.

Information supplied on the NOI form will be used to judge eligibility, and all eligible entities will be invited to submit a full proposal. **Full proposals will only be accepted from invited entities.** All applicants will be notified by EGLE via email on or before Thursday**, Friday, May 8, 2026,** regarding their eligibility and, if eligible, extended an invitation to submit a full proposal.

The request for a full proposal email will identify an NPS Program technical contact; applicants are strongly encouraged to contact the identified NPS staff to discuss their project ideas and the program priorities. All required forms for this grant proposal are available from the NPS home page (Michigan.gov/NPS under “Grant Applicant Information”). Forms should be downloaded and saved to your computer, completed, and then submitted with the other components of the grant proposal. **Do not use forms from previous years or from other programs**. Please read this information package carefully. Extraneous information will not be accepted or included in the grant proposal review process.

Full Proposals: Each project should be applied for separately, with a complete proposal package consisting of an electronic copy of all required components. The components can be combined into a single ***searchable*** PDF or submitted as separate Microsoft Office or ***searchable*** PDF files. The required electronic copy of your proposal must include **all** aspects of your proposal in a single email less than 35 MB in size sent to EGLE-NPSGrants@Michigan.gov. “Zipped” files are acceptable. Contact NPS Staff if

you are having difficulty meeting the 35 MB size limit. EGLE will respond to all proposals received. If you do not receive a reply within two hours during regular business hours, please contact Robert Sweet or Rob Selesky as described above for the NOI process. Full proposals from invited entities must be received **by 11:59 p.m., Tuesday, June 30, 2026.**

Project Clarification/Revisions
EGLE may request additional information for clarification purposes. EGLE can offer grants for amounts other than those requested and request changes to the proposed work plan.

Confidentiality
Submitted proposal information is not confidential. Grant proposals are considered public information under the Freedom of Information Act, PA 442 of 1976, as amended.

Acceptance of Contract Content
Successful applicants will be required to enter into a project contract with EGLE. A project contract consists of standard "boilerplate" language (an example is available from NPS Staff), and the project description, work plan, time line, and budget information. Failure of a successful applicant to accept these obligations as presented may result in cancellation of the grant award.

Please note: Faxed full proposals will not be accepted and late proposals will not be considered for funding.

Contacts:
For questions about this RFP and its contents, contact Robert Sweet, NPS Unit, GLWARMS, WRD, at SweetR@Michigan.gov or 517-512-9765.

For questions about specific project ideas contact the appropriate NPS Staff. Please note: NPS staff will respond to questions received through Thursday, June 18, 2026, but may not have time to answer questions received after this date.

Other Funding Sources:
The following links to additional funding sources are provided here for informational purposes only.

- EGLE - Grants and Financing
- MDNR - Grants and Loan Information
- Federal Funding Sources for Watershed Protection

Two programs that are underutilized in Michigan to fund NPS related projects are the State Revolving Fund (SRF) and the Mitigation Grant Programs. SRF can fund both NPS and Stormwater related projects. Mitigation grants fund implementation of long-term measures that reduce or eliminate risk to people and property. The Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Program in particular may be of interest to NPS stakeholders. Participation in the FMA Program requires a Federal Emergency Management Agency approved local or State mitigation plan (PDF).

People with disabilities may request this material in an alternative format by emailing EGLE-Accesibility@Michigan.gov or calling 800-662-9278.

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