2017 Mohawk River Watershed Grants

Round 4
Information for Applicants

NYS Grants Gateway
Application ID No.: DEC01-MRBR4-2017

Application Deadline: 3:00 P.M., May 24, 2017
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IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS

GRANTS REFORM

On May 15, 2013, a web-based grants management system, the Grants Gateway, was launched at https://grantsgateway.ny.gov as part of Governor Cuomo’s transformation initiative to reform the State’s grant contracting process by simplifying and streamlining the grants management process. The Grants Gateway is an online system that allows vendors to browse and apply for grant opportunities and will improve the way grants are administered by the State of New York. The Grants Gateway system capabilities include the following:

- **Opportunity Portal** – A one-stop location to search for available and anticipated grant opportunities from all New York State agencies. Sign up to receive notification when specific types of grant opportunities are posted.

- **Document Vault** – A secure online document repository for vendors/grantees to store and share commonly requested documents with State agencies. The Document Vault is utilized for the Vendor Prequalification Process. All not-for-profit organizations must be prequalified in the Grants Gateway system to be considered eligible to apply for a grant opportunity.

- **Online Contracts** – Ability for vendors/grantees to develop and execute contracts online.

- **Online Claims and Reporting (anticipate availability in 2016)** - Ability for contractors/grantees to develop and submit payment requests, supporting cost documentation, and project reports.

Grants Reform procedures require all applications to be developed and submitted online through the NYS Grants Gateway.

GRANTS GATEWAY REGISTRATION AND PREQUALIFICATION

All NYS grant applicants must be registered in the NYS Grants Gateway to be eligible to:

- Apply for a NYS grant opportunity.
- Enter into a grant contract, an amendment to an existing contract, or a letter of agreement.
- Apply for future grant payments.

In addition to registering, not-for-profit organizations must also complete the Vendor Prequalification process in the Grants Gateway to be considered eligible to apply for this grant opportunity. Government entities and public authorities are currently not required to complete the Vendor Prequalification Process.

CREATING ROLES IN THE GRANTS GATEWAY SYSTEM

Once your Organization is registered and prequalified (if applicable) in the Grants Gateway, the User with the Delegated Administrator Role must create additional roles to initiate, complete, and submit the application in Grants Gateway. Refer to Section 4.2 of the “Grantee User Guide”, located on the Grants Reform website at https://grantsreform.ny.gov/grantees, for instructions on creating user roles in the Grants Gateway system. **This step MUST be completed to submit an application in the Grants Gateway.**

GRANTS GATEWAY REGISTRATION INSTRUCTIONS

Registration is NOT an online process. Register now to allow time for processing!!

1.) On the Grants Reform Website at https://grantsreform.ny.gov/grantees download a copy of the Registration Form for Administrator.

2.) Complete the form according to the instructions provided. The completed form must be signed and notarized.

3.) Mail the signed and notarized original form to the Division of Budget at the address provided in the instructions.
4.) After the form is received and reviewed, you will be provided with a Username and Password allowing you to access the Grants Gateway.

5.) Log in to the Grants Gateway at [https://grantsgateway.ny.gov](https://grantsgateway.ny.gov). You will be prompted to change your password at the bottom of your Profile page. Enter a new password and click the SAVE button located on the top, right-hand side of the page.

If you have previously registered and do not know your Username please email grantsreform@its.ny.gov. If you do not know your Password, please click the Forgot Password link from the main log in page and follow the prompts.

**NOT FOR PROFIT PREQUALIFICATION INSTRUCTIONS**

Pursuant to the New York State Division of Budget Bulletin H-1032, dated June 7, 2013, New York State has instituted key reform initiatives to the grant application and contract processes. These initiatives require not-for-profit organizations to complete the Vendor Prequalification process to be considered eligible to apply for a grant.

Below is a summary of the steps to complete the prequalification requirements. The Vendor Prequalification Manual on the Grants Reform website at [https://grantsreform.ny.gov/grantees](https://grantsreform.ny.gov/grantees) provides additional information and instruction.

1.) Complete your Prequalification Application.
   - Log in to the Grants Gateway at [https://grantsgateway.ny.gov](https://grantsgateway.ny.gov). If this is your first time logging in, you will be prompted to change your password at the bottom of your Profile page. Enter a new password and click the SAVE button located on the top, right-hand side of the page.
   - Click the Organization(s) link at the top of the page and complete the required fields including selecting the State agency you have the most grants with. This page should be completed in its entirety before you SAVE. A Document Vault link will become available near the top of the page. Click this link to access the main Document Vault page.
   - Answer the questions in the Required Forms and upload the Required Documents. This constitutes your Prequalification Application. Optional Documents are not required unless specified in this Request for Proposal.
   - Specific questions about the prequalification process should be referred to your agency representative or to the Grants Reform Team at grantsreform@its.ny.gov.

2.) Submit Your Prequalification Application
   - After completing your Prequalification Application, click the Submit Document Vault button located below the Required Documents section to submit your Prequalification Application for State agency review. Once submitted, the status of the Document Vault will change to In Review.
   - If your Prequalification reviewer has questions or requests changes you will receive email notification from the Gateway system.
   - Once your Prequalification Application has been approved, you will receive a Gateway notification that you are now prequalified to do business with New York State.

Additional registration and prequalification information, including a video tutorial, is available on the GRANTS REFORM WEBSITE AT [HTTPS://GRANTSREFORM.NY.GOV/](https://grantsreform.ny.gov)
The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation is pleased to announce funding for projects that will implement priorities of the Mohawk River Basin Action Agenda to conserve, preserve, restore, and revitalize the environmental quality of the Mohawk River watershed. Grant application information is also available on the Department’s website at: http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/98799.html.

**I. GENERAL INFORMATION AND CONDITIONS**

**APPLICATION DEADLINE**
All applications must be submitted in the Grants Gateway by **3:00 PM on May 24, 2017**. This includes answering program questions and uploading required program documents and forms. Applications submitted after 3:00 PM on May 17, 2017 will not be eligible. Paper or email applications will NOT be accepted. It is strongly encouraged to submit applications at least two business days in advance of the deadline.

**AWARD ANNOUNCEMENT**
The Department anticipates grant awards will be announced August 1, 2017.

**FUNDING**
Approximately $200,000 is available in Mohawk River Watershed Grants from the NYS Environmental Protection Fund, Mohawk River Basin Program.

**PROJECT PERIODS/TERMS**
All projects must have defined objectives, tasks, and deliverables accounted for in performance measures that can be completed and invoiced within a twenty-four-month contract period/term. Amendments or extensions beyond the twenty-four-month term must be approved by DEC upon receipt of written justification from the Grantee. Contract terms will not exceed five years. Applicants should not begin their projects or incur costs until a Master Contract for Grants (MCG) has been fully approved by DEC and, if applicable, approved by the Attorney General and the State Comptroller.

**MINIMUM AND MAXIMUM AWARD AMOUNTS**
Minimum grant amount is $15,000.
Maximum grant amount is $50,000.
Grant funds are available for up to 85% of the total project cost. Applicants must provide the remaining **15% in match funds**.

**APPLICATION LIMIT**
Applicants may submit up to 2 applications. However, the applications may not be for the same project location and must address different project types as identified within this RFA.

**PROJECT LOCATION**
Eligible projects for grant funding must be located within defined geographic boundaries of the Mohawk River watershed. The Mohawk River watershed lies entirely within the boundaries of New York State and includes all of Montgomery County, most of Schoharie County, much of Schenectady, Greene, Fulton, Herkimer and Oneida Counties and smaller parts of Albany, Saratoga, Delaware, Hamilton, Madison and Lewis Counties. Sections of the Mohawk River also serve as the New York State Barge (Erie) Canal.

The map of eligible project boundaries included in this RFA may also be viewed at: [http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/53752.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/53752.html)
APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY
For the purposes of this grant program, the following entities are considered eligible applicants:

Governmental Entities, Municipalities, and Quasi-Governmental Entities, including but not limited to Counties, Cities, Towns, Villages, or Indian nation or tribe recognized by the state or the United States with a reservation wholly or partly within the boundaries of New York State, or any combination thereof, Public Benefit Corporations, Public Authorities, Municipal Corporations, Soil and Water Conservation Districts, School Districts, and Community Colleges, and 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporations whose projects are located within the eligible geographic boundaries defined in this Request For Applications (RFA).

Eligible applicants must be registered in the NYS Grants Gateway in order to develop and submit an online application in the NYS Grants Gateway. Applicants must have a valid Federal Employee Identification Number (FEIN) and a New York State Vendor Identification Number in order to complete their Grants Gateway registration. If a municipality (for example, a county) passes a governing resolution authorizing a department under its jurisdiction to apply for funding, that department can apply only if they are registered in the NYS Grants Gateway.

“Not-For-Profit Corporation” (NFP) - is an organization that is subject to New York State’s Not-For-Profit Corporation Law and is qualified for tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the Federal Internal Revenue Code. ALL NFP APPLICANTS MUST BE REGISTERED AND PREQUALIFIED IN THE NYS GRANTS GATEWAY BY THE DUE DATE OF THIS APPLICATION TO BE CONSIDERED ELIGIBLE FOR THIS GRANT OPPORTUNITY.

MULTI-PARTNER AND INTER-MUNICIPAL PROJECTS
If a proposed project involves a cooperative agreement or partners, only one eligible, designated lead applicant can submit the application for grant funding. The lead applicant must assume the responsibility for the project application, performance of work consistent with this RFA, and the State of New York Master Contract for Grants. Letters substantiating the collaboration from each partner are required. Letters must be signed and clearly state the partner’s commitment to the project. These letters are to be uploaded to the Grants Gateway as specified in this RFA.

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION OVERSIGHT
The Department of Environmental Conservation reserves the right to:

- Award additional and available funding for scored and ranked projects consistent with this grant opportunity.
- Award an agreement for any or all parts of the RFA in accordance with the method of award, or withdraw the RFA at any time at the Department’s sole discretion.
- Award only one application for funding in the event there are multiple application submissions for a single project or for pieces of a single project.
- Award to the next highest scoring application in the event a grantee fails to negotiate a grant contract with the Department within 60-90 days of a grant award.
- Monitor the progress of all grant awards and withdraw grant funding if the grantee fails to make significant and timely progress on the project, or fails to receive the necessary permissions and permits for the project.
- The Department reserves the right not to fund projects that are determined not to be consistent with NYS’s Smart Growth Public Infrastructure Policy Act.
II. PROJECT ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA AND INFORMATION

PROJECT OBJECTIVES
Applicants may apply for projects that seeks to achieve one or more of the following objectives of the Mohawk River Basin Action Agenda (http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/58571.html):

- Conserve, protect and restore fish, wildlife and their habitats in the Mohawk River watershed;
- Protect and improve water quality in the Mohawk River watershed;
- Promote flood hazard risk reduction and enhanced flood resiliency in the Mohawk River watershed;

MINIMUM ELIGIBILITY

- The applicant must be eligible, as outlined in this RFA. A not for profit organization must also be prequalified in the Grants Gateway by the application due date to be determined eligible under this grant opportunity.
- The project must be located within the defined geographic boundaries of the Mohawk River Watershed. The applicant must provide a map and GPS coordinates, if applicable, uploaded to the Grants Gateway.
- Project timeline must reflect project start and completion dates between October 1, 2017 and September 30, 2019.
- All project matching funding sources must be eligible, and at least 15% in matching funds have been accurately identified, fully secured and are consistent with the information provided in this RFA.
- To be eligible, projects must meet at least one project objective and implement one or more of the project types identified in this RFA;
- No project that is deemed harmful to Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) or federally listed endangered species will be deemed eligible for funding.
- If applicable, letters of collaboration that include the “Lead” applicant designation are provided from all applicant partners.
- For projects involving work on property owned by an entity that is not the applicant, the applicant must provide, as an upload to the application, a letter from the dam or culvert/bridge owner indicating commitment to implement the project on their property.
- Application completeness: The application is broken out into four sections in the Grants Gateway: Program Information, Expenditure Budget, Work Plan, and Pre-Submission Uploads. To be eligible, applicants must complete all of these sections and upload the required documentation. See the checklist on the last page of the RFA as a reference.

PROJECT TYPES
Funding must be used to implement one or more of the following project types to meet the above objectives:

- Projects that conserve, preserve, and/or restore habitat connectivity for Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) within eco-regions that fall within the boundaries of the Mohawk River watershed as identified in the 2015 New York State Wildlife Action Plan. Projects affecting one or more SGCN species, aquatic habitat connectivity for aquatic SGCN species, including designated fishes, amphibians, reptiles, or birds.
- Invasive Species Management (ISM) – Projects which promote prevention of terrestrial or aquatic invasive species. Projects directed at aquatic invasive species must be in keeping with the priorities of
the 2015 New York State Aquatic Invasive Species Management Plan. Projects that promote stewards to provide education and outreach on ISM; Projects that promote stewards conducting courtesy boat inspections. All projects must be consistent with similar programs within NYS.

- Projects that create or upgrade shoreline or waterway access opportunities in the Mohawk River watershed for boating, recreational fishing or swimming.
- Water quality improvement projects that reduce stormwater runoff, implementation of best management practices to reduce pollutant loads in the watershed, both point and non-point sources, green infrastructure projects that improve water quality in streams and/or reaches of the main-stem Mohawk River.
- Projects that reduce flood risk and improve flood resiliency such as moving, elevating or flood-proofing critical structures; assessing ways to mitigate flood risk, such as evaluations of building or infrastructure mitigation options; right-sizing culverts; or restoration of natural stream conditions.
- Projects that promote Environmental Education and Stewardship Activities within the Mohawk River watershed such as engaging and teaching students, citizens, and stakeholders to become knowledgeable and effective stewards of the Mohawk River watershed ecosystem.

PROJECT TIMELINE

- Applicants must provide a timeline for meeting project objectives and identified tasks between October 1, 2017 and September 30, 2019.
- Project expenditures prior to a Master Contract for Grants (MCG) term start date and after the MCG term end date are not eligible costs for reimbursement or match.

APPLICANT PARTNERS

The Applicant Partner is a collaborator who has a significant role in the conduct of the project, and is fundamentally a co-applicant for the grant. Projects involving an Applicant Partner (i.e. multi-partner and inter-municipal projects) require letters substantiating the commitment to collaborate that include the designation of a “Lead” applicant from each partner. A single PDF file of all letters should be uploaded to meet this requirement, if applicable for your project.

REQUIRED PERMISSIONS

The applicant must own the property, or obtain an applicable access agreement, for the proposed project site. To avoid disqualification, applicants must provide proof of property ownership and/or landowner permissions at the time of application. An applicant must upload in the Grants Gateway proof of ownership and/or landowner permissions (in a single PDF file) as follows:

- If the property is owned by the applicant – Proof of ownership, such as a copy of the current deed or a current tax parcel map.
- If the property is not owned by the applicant and the property owner is not a municipality – A formal written agreement between the applicant and landowner which allows the applicant access to the property, and represent the landowner, to accomplish the proposed project.
- If the property is not owned by the applicant and the property owner is a municipality:
  - A resolution by the municipality supporting the project.
  - A signed Municipal Endorsement. A municipal endorsement provides authorization for the not-for-profit to conduct the proposed project on municipal property. A sample municipal endorsement can be downloaded and viewed in the Pre-submission Upload section in the Grants Gateway.
  - A letter on municipal letterhead from the municipal chief operating officer providing authorization for the applicant to conduct the proposed project on municipal property.
STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT & IMPLEMENTATION COMMITMENT
Applicants are encouraged to secure the support of upstream, and perhaps downstream, landowners, as well as sporting/hunting associations, municipal leaders, highway departments, elected officials, watershed councils and other stakeholders whose support may be key to project success. Letters indicating such support from stakeholders will improve the scoring of an application (higher points are available for applicants submitting such letters). **All letters of support must be current with this application round and relevant to this RFA. Letters that do not meet this criteria will not be considered.** All letters must be submitted at the time of application.

For projects that include planning, the applicant must demonstrate how the proposed plan/project will ultimately be implemented after completion. Identify and describe how implementation will be attained. Outreach or training to help people utilize and engage with the proposed plans or designs may be included, and is encouraged where applicable. This could include identification and demonstration of social and economic benefits, including enhanced recreational opportunities, increased public visitation, increased property value, etc. Letters from stakeholders may be submitted to substantiate implementation commitment. If letters are submitted, the letters must be submitted at the time of application.

Applicants will be asked in the Grants Gateway to upload, in a single PDF file, a copy of all letters of key stakeholder support and implementation commitment.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE
Applicants must possess the knowledge, skills, and/or track record to successfully implement the project. Priority is given to applicants with excellent qualifications or a positive track record with this type of project.

PROJECT COST EFFECTIVENESS
The cost-effectiveness of the proposed project will be evaluated as provided in the Application Review and Scoring Standards in Section VII. The answer to this question, as well as the information provided in the Expenditure Budget will be used to determine scoring for cost effectiveness. Applicants that provide match above the minimum 15% are eligible for additional points for cost effectiveness.

PROJECT READINESS
Permits are not required to be in place at the time of application. However, bonus points for project readiness are available for projects that do not require permits or have all permits and determinations in place at the time of application. Information on NYS stream permits that may be involved in a project of this type can be found at [www.dec.ny.gov/permits/6042.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/permits/6042.html). The applicant is responsible for ensuring that any permits, approvals, lands, easements and rights-of-way that may be required to carry out the activities of the project are obtained. To receive bonus points, applicants must show that no permits are required or upload the approved permit cover letters (in a single PDF file) into the Grants Gateway.

STATEWIDE PRIORITY
- **Alignment with Regional Economic Development (REDC) Strategies**
  Governor Andrew Cuomo directed the establishment of Regional Economic Development Councils (REDC) to analyze the most significant business clusters in their respective areas and establish regional strategic priorities. Additional REDC information is available at [http://regionalcouncils.ny.gov](http://regionalcouncils.ny.gov). A proposed project that aligns with the strategic priorities for the region where the project is located will be eligible to receive five (5) priority points in the project scoring. To receive points, the Applicant must provide a brief description (a few sentences) describing how the project aligns with the goals and strategies of the Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) plan. The description should also cite a specific REDC goal or strategy, and the selected citation must reasonably fit with the type of project proposed. The plans are available at the following website: [http://regionalcouncils.ny.gov](http://regionalcouncils.ny.gov).
- **Priority for Environmental Justice (EJ) Projects**
  The Department demonstrates a commitment to EJ and remedies for communities that may be burdened by negative environmental consequences. Environmental justice is defined by the DEC as the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people, regardless of race, color or income, with
respect to the development, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies. A proposed project that is located in an EJ community or will directly benefit an EJ community, will be eligible for five (5) priority points in the project scoring. Maps of EJ areas in New York State are available at: http://www.dec.ny.gov/public/899.html. To qualify for the extra points, you must provide at the time of application the following details:

a.) The exact street location where the project is to be implemented (no P.O. Box) or the area where the benefit will be provided.

b.) A brief (few sentences) description of how the project will benefit minority or low-income populations that experience disproportionate adverse environmental impacts such as pollution from multiple industrial facilities, sub-standard water quality, concentrated diesel emissions from bus depots, or other heavy vehicle traffic, adverse health effects related to environmental impacts (high asthma), lack of access to green benefits such as open space, rivers and streams, environmental education or parks, or other such impacts.

- **Community Support**

  Applicants are encouraged to engage public officials in their application process to generate awareness of the project and its objectives. Applications which demonstrate support from a variety of local, county, or state appointed or elected officials beyond those essential to the project, as evidenced by letters of support uploaded with the application, will receive points
III. ADDITIONAL APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS AND INFORMATION

ADDITIONAL APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS IN THE GRANTS GATEWAY:

Expenditure Budget, Work Plan, Pre-Submission Uploads
Project compliance with state policies will be assessed, including adherence to any applicable historic preservation, coastal consistency and permit requirements, including State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR). Please be sure to include with your application, information on the following requirements, if applicable to your project:

- **Expenditure Based Budget**
  Applicants must complete an itemized budget in the Grants Gateway application that provides details of the proposed project-related expenses. Budget detail must clearly distinguish between expenses to be claimed under the State grant share and expenses comprising the match. The itemized budget should also indicate the component, the number of units to be completed and the estimated costs associated with each component. Eligible project types and their components, and eligible and ineligible costs are identified in this RFA. A project’s reasonableness of costs is at least 20% of the evaluation factor in the scoring of the application; therefore, attention to budget accuracy will increase your project score. See Section V for more details on eligible project expenditures.

- **Work Plan**
  Applicants must complete a work plan in the Grants Gateway application that provides a clear overview of the project. Applications must include proposed project objectives and tasks associated with meeting each objective, and the desired project outcome or deliverables accounted for in performance measures. The work plan should include anticipated time frames in meeting the proposed project objectives, tasks and deliverables (i.e. Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter). Time frames must be consistent with the timeline applicants are required to upload in the Grants Gateway application.

  *Note: A Work Plan Worksheet is provided in the Grants Gateway (under Pre-submission uploads) as a tool to help applicants organize their proposed project objectives, tasks, and performance measures. The Work Plan Worksheet should NOT be uploaded back into the Grants Gateway. The worksheet is intended to better assist applicants in developing their application work plan in the Grants Gateway.*

- **Pre-Submission Upload: Smart Growth Infrastructure Policy Act (mandatory)**
  New York State’s Smart Growth Public Infrastructure Policy Act (ACT), Environmental Conservation Law Article 6, requires the Department and all State infrastructure agencies to assess whether each public infrastructure project that receives state funding is consistent with the State Smart Growth Public Infrastructure criteria specified in the Act, or that compliance is considered to be impractical, before making any commitment to fund such project(s).

  In the Grants Gateway pre-submission upload section of the application, ALL applicants must download, complete and save the Smart Growth Assessment form, prior to uploading the completed form back into the Grants Gateway. *Important note: Be sure to check the form after uploading to ensure the correct file is uploaded, and it is completed as required.*

- **Pre-Submission Upload: Checklist (Mandatory)**
  The checklist in Section VIII of the RFA must be completed and uploaded as a pre-submission upload. For convenience, a version of the checklist is provided as a document template and is available in the Pre-Submission Upload area in the Grants Gateway. The checklist is intended to assist applicants in ensuring all RFA requirements are met and uploaded to the Grants Gateway.
- **Historic Preservation Review Requirements, (if applicable to your project)**
  For projects that involve properties listed on the State or National Registers of Historic Places, all work undertaken as part of a grant-assisted project must conform to the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards and Guidelines for Archaeology and Historic Preservation. Questions about or proposals for listing on the State or national Register should be directed to the OPRHP National Register Unit at (518) 237-8643. To ensure the public benefit from the investment of state funding, preservation covenants or conservation easements will be conveyed to the State (OPRHP) for all historic property grants.
IV. APPLICATION EVALUATION, SCORING AND SELECTION

All applications will be reviewed and scored by a review team in accordance with the evaluation and scoring criteria contained in this RFA. Applicants are strongly encouraged to read and address the Application Evaluation and Scoring Standards in Section VII in the process of developing an application. Knowledge of the scoring criteria is valuable for designing and proposing a relevant and quality project. Scoring consists of two steps:

**Step 1: Application and project eligibility determination**
Pass/Fail criteria – please refer to the Application Evaluation and Scoring Standards in Section VII.

**Step 2: Project evaluation, scoring, and selection**
If your application meets all eligibility criteria it will be further evaluated and scored by a review team in accordance with the Evaluation and Scoring Standards contained in this RFA. These include:
- Evaluation of the project type, objectives, budget and applicant qualifications;
- Assessment of the project impact, and priority project eligibility.

All eligible applications will be individually evaluated and scored by at least 2 technical review team members. Technical reviewer scores will be averaged and statewide priority points will be added to the averaged score to determine a final composite score.

**Tie breaker** - If there is a numerical tie in an applications final score, the application that scores the highest in “Project Readiness Factors” in the evaluation criteria will determine placement on the ranked list. If a tie remains, the application that scores the highest in “Project Success Factors” in the evaluation criteria number will determine placement on the ranked list. If a tie still remains, the order applications are received will determine placement on the ranked list, with the earliest application placing highest.

**QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**
Please email all Mohawk River Watershed grant opportunity questions to Katherine Czajkowski, Mohawk Watershed Coordinator at katherine.czajkowski@dec.ny.gov. Include “2017 Mohawk Watershed Grants” in the subject line of the email. Questions regarding this grant opportunity will be accepted by the Department until C.O.B. May 17, 2017. All questions, and answers, will be uploaded in the Grants Gateway application for all applicants to view.
V. GRANT PROGRAM PAYMENT AND REPORTING

PAYMENT AND REPORTING

- Advance payments of up to 25% of the awarded grant amount may be available to not-for-profit grantees once a Master Contract for Grants (MCG) has been fully approved by all applicable State agencies. **Only not-for-profits are eligible to receive advance payments under State Finance Law.**

- Project costs eligible for reimbursement and project match must be incurred between the MCG term start date and the MCG term end date. Costs incurred prior to the MCG term start date or after the MCG term end date will not be considered eligible for grant reimbursement or match. Copies of supporting cost documentation (paid invoices, receipts, cancelled checks, etc.) must be audited and approved by the Department for costs to be eligible for grant reimbursement.

- Quarterly MCG payment reimbursement requests will be accepted prior to submission of a final closeout reimbursement request. Approved project design, required permits and landowner permissions must be in place to submit a reimbursement request.

- Quarterly Narrative Reports must be submitted in narrative form, no later than 30 days from the end of the quarter. The reports will summarize how the project progressed towards meeting project objectives and deliverables during the quarter.

- Quarterly Expenditure Reports, detailed by object of expense as defined in the MCG Attachment B-1 Expenditure Based Budget, must accompany the quarterly Narrative Reports, no later than 30 days from the end of the quarter. These reports must correlate to subsequent vouchers submitted for payment.

- Final Report must be submitted and approved by the Department prior to the release of the final contract payment to the Grantee. The Contract must submit the Final Report no later than 60 days after the end of the contract period. The Final Report should report on all aspects of the program and detail how the use of grant funds were utilized in achieving the goals set forth in the approved MCG Attachment C Work Plan. Copies of appropriate documents (i.e. inventory and/or management plan) must be submitted and approved by the Department.

- A Department on-site inspection may be required to confirm all work was completed in accordance with the approved project work plan (including the installation of interpretive signage, if applicable, at the project site).

- Any project involving volunteer time will be required to report the number of volunteers and the number of volunteer hours in their project quarterly status reports. The total number of volunteers and volunteer hours for the entire project must be reported in the Final Report.

PROJECT EXPENDITURES

- **Eligible expenditures for grant funding**
  
  **Personal Service:** staff salaries, including fringe benefits, directly devoted to the project. Itemize salaries according to job title and roles/responsibilities on the project. Grantees will be required to document time worked, tasks, pay ratio and payment.

  **Contractual Services:** the value of services provided by responsible, professional and technical personnel and consultants (i.e. engineering and architectural services, surveys, plans and specifications, research, design and development of a project, consultant and legal services directly related to a project, feasibility study for a facility, archaeological field work, report writing, curation of artifacts and interpretation, etc.).

  **Supplies and materials:** directly associated with implementation of the project.

  **Equipment Rental:** equipment that is necessary to implement the project.
Travel Costs: directly associated and required to implement the project.

- **Ineligible expenditures for grant funding**
  
  Indirect costs: overhead or operating expenses (space, rent, utilities) are ineligible costs.

  Travel costs: NOT directly associated and required to implement the project

  Administrative salaries: administrative salaries are NOT eligible for grant reimbursement, but may be used as match funds. For the purposes of this RFA, administrative salaries are defined as follows:
  
  - Preparation of equal employment opportunity and women and minority business enterprises documentation.
  
  - Preparation of quarterly narrative and expenditure reports.
  
  - Preparation of payment reimbursement request forms and backup cost documentation.
  
  - Preparation of Final Report upon project completion.

  State and/or federal funding: project costs funded from other state and/or federal funding sources are not eligible for grant reimbursement.

**MATCH REQUIREMENT AND EXPENDITURES**

Grant funds are available for up to 85% of the total project cost. Applicants must provide the remaining **15% in match funds.** Portions of the project funded from other state and/or federal funding sources are not considered to be eligible forms of match.

- **Eligible forms of match**
  
  **Cash:** Includes other grants from non-state or non-federal funding sources.

  **Personal Service:** staff salaries, including fringe, directly devoted to the project. Itemize salaries according to job title and roles/responsibilities on the project. Grantees will be required to document time worked, tasks, pay ratio and payment.

  **Contractual Services:** The value of services provided by responsible professional and technical personnel and consultants (i.e. engineering and architectural services, surveys, plans and specifications, research, design and development of a project, consultant and legal services directly related to a project, feasibility study for a facility, archaeological field work, report writing, curation of artifacts and interpretation, etc.).

  **Supplies and materials:** The current market value of items warehoused (not yet installed); use value current at time items were obtained.

  **Volunteer Labor:** Skilled and professional labor can be computed at the job rate. Unskilled labor and work performed by professionals or skilled laborers in an area outside of their area of expertise must be computed at the minimum wage (For example, a lawyer donating legal services may compute the value based on the standard billing rate, but the same lawyer donating time painting walls must calculate the value using minimum wage).

  **Equipment Usage:** Compute the value according to its fair market rental value in the project location.

  **Administrative Salaries:** Administrative salaries must be documented and identified by task, and must fall within the grant contract term to be eligible as match. For the purposes of this RFA, administrative salaries are defined as follows:
  
  - Preparation of equal employment opportunity and women and minority business enterprises documentation.
  
  - Preparation of quarterly narrative and expenditure reports.
- Preparation of payment reimbursement request forms and backup cost documentation.

- Preparation of Final Report upon project completion.

  Applicants must clearly identify administrative salaries to be used towards match in the personal services detail section of the expenditure budget.

Value of land easements: For an easement to be considered eligible match, credible documentation proving appraised value of the easement must be uploaded to the Grants Gateway.

- **Ineligible forms of match**

  **Indirect costs**: overhead or operating expenses (space, rent, utilities)

  **Travel**: NO forms of travel are eligible for match

  **State or Federal funding**: project costs funded from other state and/or federal funding sources.
VI. WHAT TO EXPECT IF YOU RECEIVE AN AWARD

NOTIFICATION OF AWARD
Applicants selected to receive a grant award will be notified by email and in an official Department award letter.

STATE OF NEW YORK MASTER CONTRACT FOR GRANTS (MCG)
Applicants selected to receive a grant award will be required to execute a MCG within 60-90 days from the time of their award notification. Failure to submit timely required MCG documents could cause a grantee to lose their grant award. Applicants should review and be prepared to comply with all MCG terms and conditions should grant funding be awarded. The MCG and attachments can be reviewed and/or downloaded in the Grants Gateway HRE application under the screen named ‘Contract Document Properties’. The MCG and attachments include:

- MCG Grants Face Page
- Standard Terms and Conditions (*NYS standard terms and conditions*)
- Attachment A-1 Program Specific Terms and Conditions (*Agency and Program specific terms and conditions*)
- Attachment B-1 Expenditure Based Budget (*project expense categories and detail*)
- Attachment C Work Plan (*project objectives, tasks and performance measures*)
- Attachment D Payment and Reporting Schedule (*claims for reimbursement and grant reporting provisions*)

IMPORTANT NOTE: Project related costs must be incurred within the term of the MCG to be considered eligible for reimbursement or match. Contract payments will not be approved or processed by the Department until a MCG is fully approved by the Department, and as applicable, the Attorney General and the State Comptroller. All contracts must be approved by the projected contract start date of September 1, 2017.

Applicants should be prepared to comply with the following MCG requirements:

- **Insurance Requirements**
  Applicants will be required to carry appropriate insurance upon execution of a MCG and as specified in the MGC Attachment A-1 Program Specific Terms and Conditions, and agree that each project consultant, project contractor and project subcontractor secures and delivers to the contractor appropriate policies of insurance issued by an insurance company licensed to do business in the State of New York. Please refer to Program Terms and Conditions for additional insurance information.

- **Permit Requirements (if applicable)**
  Contractors agree to obtain all required permits, including but not limited to, local, state and federal permits prior to the commencement of any project-related work. The Contractor agrees that all work performed in relation to the project by the Contractor or its agents, representatives, or contractors will comply with all relevant federal, state and local laws, rules, regulations and standards, zoning and building codes, ordinances, operating certificates for facilities, or licenses for an activity.

**State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) Documentation**
With respect to the project, the Contractor certifies that it has complied, and shall continue to comply with all requirements of the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA). The Contractor agrees to provide all environmental documents as may be required by the Department. The Contractor has notified, and shall continue to notify, the Department of all actions proposed for complying with the environmental review requirements imposed by SEQRA.
Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire
Not-For-Profit contractors and/or subcontractors are subject to a vendor responsibility review by the State to ensure public dollars are being spent appropriately with responsible contractors. A vendor responsibility review may include a contractor and/or subcontractor to present evidence of its continuing legal authority to do business in NYS, integrity, experience, ability, prior performance, and organizational and financial capacity. To enroll in and use the NYS VendRep System, see the VendRep System instructions available at http://www.osc.state.ny.us/vendrep/info_vrsystem.htm or go directly to the VendRep System at https://portal.osc.state.ny.us.

Iran Divestment Act
As a result of the Iran Divestment Act of 2012 (Act), Chapter 1 of the 2012 Laws of New York, a new provision has been added to the State Finance Law (SFL), § 165-a, effective April 12, 2012. By entering into a Contract, the Contractor certifies that it is not on the “Entities Determined To Be Non-Responsive Bidders/Offerers Pursuant to The New York State Iran Divestment Act of 2012” list (“Prohibited Entities List”) posted on the OGS website at: http://www.ogs.ny.gov/about/regs/docs/ListofEntities.pdf and further certifies that it will not utilize on such Contract any subcontractor that is identified on the Prohibited Entities List. Additional detail on the Iran Divestment Act can be found in the MCG, Attachment A-1 Program Specific Terms and Conditions.

MINORITY/WOMEN BUSINESS ENTERPRISES (M/WBE) AND EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES (EEO) REQUIREMENTS
The Department is required to implement the provisions of New York State Executive Law Article 15-A and 5 NYCRR Parts 142-144 (“MWBE Regulations”) for all State contracts with a value (1) in excess of $25,000 for labor, services, equipment, materials, or any combination of the foregoing or (2) in excess of $100,000 for real property renovations and construction.

- Applicants subject to executing a future NYS Master Contract for Grants agree, in addition to any other nondiscrimination provision of the MCG and at no additional cost to the Department, to fully comply and cooperate with the Department in the implementation of New York State Executive Law Article 15-A. These requirements include equal employment opportunities for minority group members and women (“EEO”) and contracting opportunities for certified minority and women-owned business enterprises (“MWBEs”). Contractor’s demonstration of “good faith efforts” pursuant to 5 NYCRR §142.8 shall be a part of these requirements. These provisions shall be deemed supplementary to, and not in lieu of, the nondiscrimination provisions required by New York State Executive Law Article 15 (the “Human Rights Law”) or other applicable federal, state or local laws.

- Failure to comply with M/WBE and EEO requirements may result in a Department finding of non-responsiveness, non-responsibility and/or a breach of contract, leading to the withholding of funds or such other actions, liquidated damages or enforcement proceedings.

- Please refer to the NYS Master Contract for Grants - Article IV.(J) and Attachment A-1 Program Specific Terms and Conditions - Article X, to review M/WBE and EEO requirements. Required M/WBE and EEO related forms can be found at http://www.dec.ny.gov/about/48854.html

- The local government is responsible for designating someone to serve as their Affirmative Action representative. The governing body should make this designation through official means.

- A list of certified M/WBE enterprises can be obtained via the internet from the NYS Department of Economic Development at https://ny.newnycontracts.com/FrontEnd/VendorSearchPublic.asp?TN=ny&XID=9885

- Contracts which meet the established M/WBE-EEO thresholds require the Contractor to submit Quarterly Reports, http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/administration_pdf/quarterlyversion7.pdf, detailing payments made by the Prime Contractor to NYS Certified M/WBEs.

- The following M/WBE-EEO “Fair Share” goals are established as follows:
Minority and Women Owned Business Enterprise (MWBE) Overall Participation Goals:
- Construction/Engineering – 30%
- Commodities – 30%
- Services/Technologies – 30%

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Participation Goals:
- EEO Minority Workforce Participation Goals (DEC Regions 1-9) 10%
- EEO Female Workforce Participation Goals (DEC Regions 1-9) 10%

- DEC M/WBE Contact Person
  Carla Leubner, Compliance Specialist
  NYS Department of Environmental Conservation
  Bureau of Contract and Grant Development/MWBE Program
  625 Broadway, 10th Floor
  Albany, New York 12233-5028
  Phone: (518) 402-9240
  Fax: (518) 402-9023

PROCUREMENT OF CONTRACTORS/SUBCONTRACTORS
Municipalities must comply with General Municipal Law Sections 103 (competitive bidding) and 104-b (procurement policies and procedures). Not-for-profit corporations must follow procurement policies that ensure prudent and economical use of public money. Failure to comply with these requirements could jeopardize full reimbursement of your approved eligible project costs.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT
In the event the monies defined herein are to be used for the development of facilities, outdoor recreation areas, transportation or written or spoken communication with the public, the Contractor shall comply with all requirements for providing access for individuals with disabilities as established by Article 4A of the New York State Public Buildings Law, Americans with Disabilities Act, and relevant sections of the New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code. Standards for certain Recreation Facilities are found in the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design while others are found in the Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Guidelines for Outdoor Recreation Areas https://www.access-board.gov/guidelines-and-standards.
VII. APPLICATION EVALUATION AND SCORING STANDARDS

(Maximum 150 points)

All applications will be reviewed and scored by a review team in accordance with the evaluation and scoring criteria contained in this RFA. **Applicants are strongly encouraged to read and address the Application Evaluation and Scoring Standards in the process of developing an application.** Knowledge of the scoring criteria is valuable for designing and proposing a relevant and quality project.

**PROJECT PASS/FAIL CRITERIA: a “Fail” to any statement will disqualify the application**

- The applicant is eligible as provided on Page 7 of this RFA. A not for profit organization must also be pre-qualified in the Grants Gateway by the application due date to be determined eligible under this grant opportunity.
- The project is located within the defined geographic boundaries of the Mohawk River Watershed.
- The project implements at least one or more of the specified project objectives and implements one or more of the project types identified in this RFA.
- The uploaded project schedule/timeline demonstrates completion of project objectives, tasks and deliverables on or before September 30, 2019.
- All project matching funding sources must be eligible, and at least 15% in matching funds have been accurately identified, fully secured and are consistent with the information provided in this RFA.
- If applicable, letters of collaboration, or resolutions/cooperative agreements that include the “Lead” applicant designation are provided from all applicable partners.
- No project that is deemed harmful to Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) or federally listed endangered species will be deemed eligible for funding.
- For projects involving work on property owned by an entity that is not the applicant, the applicant must provide as an upload to the application, a letter from the landowner indicating willingness for the project to take place on their property. For example, a “Friends of the Park” group must have a letter from the park owner.
- Application is complete and all required paperwork is submitted.

**PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND TYPE ..........................................................maximum 40 points**

How well does the project, its location, its method and its deliverables impact the primary objective of this RFA to conserve, protect and restore fish, wildlife and their habitats, protect and improve water quality, and promote flood hazard risk reduction and enhanced flood resiliency in the Mohawk River watershed. **Applicants must state explicitly which goals of the Mohawk River Basin Action Agenda their project works to fulfill and how their project will do so.**

- Project type, tasks and outcomes as described clearly meet objectives............................................................30 points
- Project type, tasks and outcomes as described contribute to, but do not fully meet objectives......5 points

**Bonus points for meeting more than one objective of this RFA:**

- More than one objective is clearly identified to be met.................................................................10 points
- Only one objective identified and met.........................................................................................no points
Stakeholder Engagement and Implementation Commitment (maximum 10 points):
How well does the project engage key stakeholders whose support is needed for the project to succeed? Does application demonstrate support from other organizations or landowners? Have concerns from potential upstream and downstream project opponents been addressed through outreach and engagement? Do planning projects demonstrate support and commitment to implement?

- Key stakeholder engagement indicates project success is very likely (examples include support of upstream and downstream landowners, municipal leaders, highway departments, sporting/hunting associations, engagement of stakeholders and organizations). Letters of support are provided. Planning projects demonstrate a clear path to implementation………………………………………………………………..10 points
- Letters are not provided, but acceptable engagement strategies are demonstrated and key stakeholders are identified, indicating project success is likely. Plans to implement a planning project are broadly defined, but are likely to be implemented………………………………………………………………..5 points
- Known, crucial key stakeholders are not engaged, or stakeholder engagement appears insufficient to ensure project success………………………………………………………………………………………………………………no points

Bonus points for education to promote knowledgeable stewardship (maximum 5 points):

1. Does the project include elements to promote knowledgeable stewardship with the public?
   - Project includes elements that engage and teach citizens and stakeholders about the project and benefits to the watershed (e.g. signage, educational event, educating volunteers, etc.)…………….5 points
   - No education component………………………………………………………………………………………………………no points

Knowledge, Skills and/or Experience (maximum 10 points):
Does the applicant demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and/or track record to successfully undertake a project of this nature? Does the applicant demonstrate experience with and understanding of aquatic organism passage?

- Exceptionally well qualified and/or superior track record for this type of project.........................10 points
- Qualified and/or satisfactory track record.................................................................................................5 points
- Not well qualified and/or has a poor track record......................................................................................no points

Bonus points for project readiness – permits secured (maximum 7 points):

- All required permits are secured, or the project does not need permits.................................7 points
- None of the above.................................................................................................................................no points

Bonus points for meeting minimum standards for qualifications, key stakeholder support and implementation, and cost effectiveness (maximum 8 points):

Does applicant receive points in qualifications, key stakeholder support & implementation, and cost effectiveness?

- Yes............................................................................................................................................................8 points
- No............................................................................................................................................................no points
PROJECT COST EFFECTIVENESS ..................................................................................................................maximum 55 points

How well does the budget demonstrate value for cost? Cost effectiveness will be evaluated from the standpoint of both cost match, balance, and value. Applicants may compare the project costs to other similar work and explain the balance of expenses across budget categories. To sufficiently respond to this question, applicants are encouraged to upload documentation to support specific budget items, such as standard government wage rates, current market prices for equipment, and cost-estimates from potential contractors / vendors.

- **Exceptional value for the cost:** Projects that meet both of the following two criteria will score 55 points:
  - Project provides 25% match or more, and
  - Budget is well-balanced, and does not contain any extraneous expenses. Cost to benefit ratio is appropriate for the complexity and size of the project. Anticipated benefits are at a scale and cost equivalent to the fair market value of the proposed budget.

- **Cost-effectiveness is reasonable:** Budget is well-balanced, and does not contain any extraneous expenses. Cost to benefit ratio is appropriate for the complexity and size of the project. Anticipated benefits are at a scale and cost equivalent to the fair market value of the proposed budget. (42 points)

- **Project is not cost effective:** Budget is unreasonable, not cost-effective, is confusing, extraneous, excessive or not well aligned with the project purpose. (No points)

STATEWIDE PRIORITY POINTS ........................................................................................................maximum 15 points

Regional Economic Development Plan:
Has the applicant demonstrated the project implements part of a Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) Plan?

- If yes, add ..................................................................................................................................................5 points

Environmental Justice:
Will the proposed project benefit a designated Environmental Justice Community and has the necessary EJ application information been provided?

- If yes, add..................................................................................................................................................5 points

Community Support:
Above and beyond essential project support. Does the application demonstrate support from a variety of local, county, or state appointed or elected officials?

- If yes, add..................................................................................................................................................5 points

TOTAL ELIGIBLE POINTS ..................................................................................................................150 points
VIII. APPLICATION CHECKLIST

This checklist is mandatory to ensure applicant eligibility, project eligibility, and proper application completion. Incomplete or ineligible applications will not be evaluated for funding.

- **PASS/FAIL CRITERIA**
  (Check the following boxes (☒) to indicate the item is addressed in the application, or is N/A)
  - ☐ Applicant is registered in the Grants Gateway as an eligible applicant for this program.
  - ☐ NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS ONLY: Applicant is prequalified in the Grants Gateway by the application due date.
  - ☐ Project is located within the defined geographical boundaries of the Mohawk River Watershed.
  - ☐ Project implements one of the specified eligible project types.
  - ☐ Project timeline indicates completion by September 30, 2019.
  - ☐ All project funding sources are eligible and at least 15% in eligible match has been identified.
  - ☐ If applicable, letters of collaboration are provided for all applicant partners.
  - ☐ Property permissions are provided, if applicable.
  - ☐ Project DOES NOT adversely affect any SGCN or federally listed species.
  - ☐ Application is complete in the Grants Gateway (make sure to “Check Global Errors”).

- **GRANTS GATEWAY FORMS (Program Information, Expenditure-Based budget, and Work Plan)**
  (Check the following boxes (☒) to indicate the item is addressed in the application, or is N/A)
  - ☐ Program Information: Project site information is provided, and ALL program-specific questions are answered and applicable/required documents are uploaded for each question. (Mandatory)
    - **Mandatory uploads:**
      - ☐ A project timeline, showing project start date of October 1, 2017 with a completion date of September 30, 2019.
      - ☐ Letters of support as evidence of stakeholder engagement.
    - **Optional uploads:**
      - ☐ Documentation (i.e. vendor quotes) for cost-effectiveness.
      - ☐ Documentation confirming readiness in terms of permits and design plans.
      - ☐ Letters demonstrating “above and beyond” community support.
  - ☐ The expenditure-based budget is completed, including justifications for all budget items.
  - ☐ The work plan is provided with clear objectives, tasks, and performance measures.

- **MANDATORY UPLOADS (found in Pre-submission Uploads section in the Grants Gateway)**
  - ☐ Smart Growth Assessment Form has been completed and uploaded into the Grants Gateway.
  - ☐ This Application Checklist is completed and uploaded into the Grants Gateway.

* ☐ **CHECK ALL UPLOADED DOCUMENTS AFTER UPLOADING TO ENSURE THE CORRECT DOCUMENT IS UPLOADED.**