



GUIDELINES AND APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

New York State
Department of Environmental Conservation
Hudson River Estuary Program

*Round 39
2023 Hudson River Estuary Grants
For
Tributary Restoration and Resiliency*

*NYS Grants Gateway Application ID No.:
DEC01-HRER39-2023*

Application Due Date: (3:00 P.M. EST, July 12, 2023)

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Introduction

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation is pleased to announce funding for projects to support restoration of free-flowing waters to benefit water quality, conserve and restore habitat, and help communities with existing and projected impacts of localized flooding.

Applications must be submitted through the NYS Grants Gateway (<https://grantsgateway.ny.gov>). Paper applications will NOT be accepted. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit their applications prior to the application deadline. Late applications will not be accepted. For more information about Grants Gateway, please visit the Grants Management website (<https://grantsmanagement.ny.gov/>) or contact the Grants Gateway Team at: grantsgateway@its.ny.gov. The [Grants Gateway help desk](#) can be reached at (518) 474-5595.

Grant application information is also available on the Department's website at: www.dec.ny.gov/lands/5091.html.

Timetable of Key Events

Event:	Date:
Application Period Begins	May 10, 2023
Question & Answer Period Ends	July 5, 2023
Applications Due	July 12, 2023; 3:00 p.m. ET
Award(s) Announced By (anticipated)	Approximately December 2023

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 RFA.

For this grant opportunity, a "Not-For-Profit Corporation" (NFP) 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, has filed a Certificate of Incorporation to be incorporated in New York State and is current in their charities reporting requirements with the Office of the Attorney General.

Individuals and unincorporated groups are not eligible for this grant opportunity. However, an eligible applicant may apply on behalf of an individual or unincorporated group as a fiscal sponsor. The fiscal sponsor accepts responsibility of the grant and serves as a fiscal conduit for a DEC-funded project, receiving and disbursing funds related to the grant, and administering the requirements throughout the DEC grant process, including final reporting of grant activity.

For Multi-Partner and Inter-Municipal Projects: If a proposed project involves a cooperative agreement or partners, only one eligible, designated lead applicant must 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 (MCG). Letters

substantiating the collaboration from each partner are required. These letters are to be uploaded to the Grants Gateway in a single PDF (see “Applicant Partners” on page 14).

Grant Opportunity General Information and Conditions

1. Funding

Approximately \$650,000 is available under this grant opportunity as follows:

- NYS Environmental Protection Fund, Hudson River Estuary Program – approximately \$400,000
- NYS Environmental Protection Fund, Ocean Great Lakes Program – approximately \$250,000

2. Proposed Project Timeframes

All projects must have defined objectives, tasks, and deliverables accounted for in performance measures that can be completed and invoiced within a two-year contract period/term of February 1, 2024 through January 31, 2026. Applicants should not begin their projects or incur costs until a MCG has been fully approved by DEC, and if applicable approved by the Attorney General and the State Comptroller. Time extensions beyond the contract term end date will be determined by the DEC based upon written justification from the Grantee. Applicants should not submit an application if they do not anticipate their project can be completed within the specified contract term.

3. Minimum and Maximum Award Amounts

The minimum grant amount is \$10,500. The maximum grant amount is \$150,000.

4. Application Limit/Award limit

Applicants may submit up to five applications. Multiple applications may not be for the same project or project location.

5. Eligible Project Locations

Eligible projects for grant funding must be located within defined geographic boundaries of the Hudson River Estuary watershed (see map in Appendix I). “Hudson River Estuary” refers to the legislatively designated Hudson River Estuarine District established in Environmental Conservation Law §11-0306, which extends from the Troy dam to the Verrazano Narrows and includes Upper New York Bay to Kill Van Kull and the East River to Hell Gate, focused on the tributaries that flow into any of these waters. The map of eligible boundaries may also be viewed at www.dec.ny.gov/docs/remediation_hudson_pdf/hregrantmap.pdf. A searchable Google Maps version is also available for download at: <https://www.dec.ny.gov/pubs/103459.html#hudson> (Data Set titled “Hudson River Estuary Grant Program boundaries” listed under the “Misc. Environmental Maps” Section)

6. Match Requirement and Expenditures

Match is the portion of project expenditures not paid for with grant funds. Match can be from local and/or in-kind contributions. Local sources can include funding from other non-state and/or non-federal grant sources or from project partners. In-Kind contributions are non-cash donations provided by non-state and/or non-federal third parties, which can include equipment, supplies, services, and other expendable property. Matching share contributions must support the objectives outlined in the work plan.

For this grant opportunity, applicants must match at least 15% of the grant funding amount. A match of 30% or more will qualify for additional points in the scoring.

Eligible sources of match funds cannot come from other New York State or federal funding sources. Applicants will be required to provide the sources of all matching funds using the Match Worksheet in the Grants Gateway.

7. New for this Grant Round

- Eligible project types remain unchanged for this round.

8. Inquiries & Designated Contact Information:

For general information on completing this application and for clarification of application requirements, contractual terms and procedures, contact: Susan Pepe, Hudson River Estuary Program Grants Coordinator; HREPgrants@dec.ny.gov.

For technical information regarding the Grants Gateway application, direct questions to: NYS Grants Management, grantsgateway@its.ny.gov or (518) 474-5595

Include **2023 Round 39 Tributary RFA** in the **subject line** of the email. Questions regarding this grant opportunity will be accepted by the DEC until C.O.B., July 5, 2023. All questions, and answers, will be uploaded in the Grants Gateway application for all applicants to view.

9. Debriefing

In accordance with section 163 of the NY State Finance Law, DEC must, upon request, provide a debriefing to any unsuccessful offeror that responded to the Program Overview, regarding the reasons that the proposal or bid submitted by the unsuccessful offeror was not selected for an award. An unsuccessful offeror wanting a debriefing must request a debriefing in writing, within fifteen calendar days of receipt of the notice that their proposal did not result in an award. Debriefings requested after fifteen calendar days may be denied.

10. Protest Procedure

DEC does not have a formal protest procedure, therefore an applicant may file an initial protest with OSC's Bureau of Contracts (BOC) after the Department has made a contract award. The protest must be in writing and filed with BOC within ten business days of notice of the contract award or if a debriefing has been requested by the interested party, within five business days of the debriefing (whichever is later). If the interested party is not provided with notice of the contract award, the interested party may file a protest with BOC at any time after the contract award and prior to the Comptroller's final action on the contract.

Formal protests concerning a pending contract award must be received within five (5) business days after the protesting party knows or should have known of the facts that constitute the basis of the formal protest.

The protest must be filed with:

Bureau Director
at bidprotests@osc.ny.gov or
Bureau of Contracts
New York State Office of the State Comptroller
110 State Street, 11th Floor
Albany, NY 12236

11. 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;
- Partially fund an application if the partially-funded portion can be demonstrated to meet the criteria for this RFA;
- Reject any or all applications in response to the RFA at the agency's sole discretion;

- Reduce an award from the amount requested in the application, so long as the reduced funding does not jeopardize the viability of the project to proceed at the reduced funding level;
- Reduce an award from the amount requested in the application, should the project budget contain costs considered ineligible under this grant program;
- Not fund projects that are determined not to be consistent with NYS's Smart Growth Public Infrastructure Policy Act.
- Not fund projects that are determined not to be consistent with the Climate Change Leadership and Community Protection Act or its' implementing regulations.
- 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 DEC's sole discretion;
- Award to the next highest scoring application in the event a grantee fails to execute a grant contract with DEC within 60 days of a grant award; or
- 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.

12. Application Submission:

Applications must be submitted through the NYS Grants Gateway (<https://grantsgateway.ny.gov>). Using **Microsoft Edge** to access the Grants Gateway is recommended. Using other browsers may cause errors in the Work Plan section of the application.

Paper applications will NOT be accepted. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit their applications prior to the application deadline. **Late applications will not be accepted under any circumstances.** Please note: those logged in as Grantees may work on the application, only those logged in as a Grantee Contract Signatory or a Grantee System Administrator can submit the application to the State. When the application is ready for submission, click the Status Changes tab, then click the "Apply Status" button under "Application Submitted."

All Applicants must be **Registered** with Grants Gateway to submit an application. In addition to registration, **not-for-profits** must also be **Prequalified** at the time and date that the application is due. If you are not Prequalified at that time and date, your application will not be considered.

**PLEASE DO NOT DELAY IN BEGINNING AND COMPLETING THE
PREQUALIFICATION PROCESS.
THE STATE RESERVES 5 DAYS TO REVIEW SUBMITTED
PREQUALIFICATION APPLICATIONS. PREQUALIFICATION APPLICATIONS
SUBMITTED TO THE STATE FOR REVIEW LESS THAN 5 DAYS PRIOR TO
THE DEADLINE FOR THIS APPLICATION MAY NOT BE CONSIDERED.
APPLICANTS SHOULD NOT ASSUME THAT THEIR PREQUALIFICATION
INFORMATION WILL BE REVIEWED IF THEY DO NOT ADHERE TO THIS
TIMEFRAME.**

Applicant Prequalification

Pursuant to the New York State Division of Budget Bulletin H-1032, Revised, effective July 16, 2014, New York State has instituted key reform initiatives to the grant contract. Information on these initiatives can be found on the [Grants Management Website](#).

All Applicants must be Prequalified in the Grants Gateway at the time and date that the application is due. Applications received from nonprofit Applicants that have not registered and are not Prequalified

in the Grants Gateway by the application due date and time listed at the beginning of this document cannot be evaluated. If you are not Prequalified at that time and date, your application will not be considered. **Such applications will be disqualified from further consideration.**

Below is a summary of the steps that must be completed to meet registration and Prequalification requirements. [Vendor Prequalification](#) on the Grants Management Website provides details the requirements and an online tutorial is available to further explain the process.

PLEASE NOTE: The information included here regarding Prequalification is not intended to be exhaustive, and Applicants should visit the Grants Management website (<https://grantsmanagement.ny.gov/>) or contact the Grants Gateway Team (grantsgateway@its.ny.gov) for more information about Grants Gateway and Prequalification. The [Grants Gateway help desk](#) can be reached at (518) 474-5595.

1. Register for the Grants Gateway

- On the Grants Management Website, download a copy of the [Registration Form for Administrator](#). A signed, notarized original form must be sent to the NYS Grants Gateway Team at the address provided in the instructions. You will be provided with a Username and Password allowing you to access the Grants Gateway.
- If you have previously registered and do not know your Username please email grantsgateway@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.

2. Complete your Prequalification Application

- Log in to the Grants Gateway. **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 SAVE.
- 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.
- Answer the questions in the *Required Forms* and upload *Required Documents*. This constitutes your Prequalification application. Optional Documents are not required unless specified in this document.
- Specific questions about the Prequalification process should be referred to your agency representative or to the Grants Gateway Team at grantsgateway@its.ny.gov. The [Grants Gateway help desk](#) can be reached at (518) 474-5595.

3. Submit Your Prequalification Application

- After completing your Prequalification application, click the **Submit Document Vault** link 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.

Once you are Prequalified, please check the status of your document vault on a regular basis to ensure that none of your documents expire prior to the application due date. Refer to [Section 4.7 of](#)

[the Grants Gateway Vendor User Guide](#) for more information about maintaining prequalification status.

If you are not familiar with Grants Gateway, there are many resources available to help you understand how to register and become Prequalified:

- [The NYS Grants Management Website](#)
- [Video: Grants Gateway Registration](#)
- [Grants Gateway FAQ](#) and [Prequalification FAQ](#)
- [Twice-weekly Document Vault webinars](#). All information can be found on the Grants Management website - <https://grantsmanagement.ny.gov/live-webinars>

The Grants Gateway Team offers live webinars for anyone who is interested in additional information about Grants Gateway, the Prequalification process, or submitting applications. Learn more including times and dates for these webinars: <https://grantsmanagement.ny.gov/live-webinars>. Any additional training related to this application will also be posted to the training calendar.

You can also contact the Grants Gateway Team for additional assistance:

Phone: (518) 474-5595; Email: grantsgateway@its.ny.gov

Grant Application Requirements and Conditions

1. Project Objectives

This Hudson River Estuary Program RFA for Tributary Restoration and Resiliency seeks to achieve one or more of the following objectives of the *Hudson River Estuary Action Agenda* (<https://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/5104.html>).

- Conserve and restore habitat for migratory fish in tributary streams of the Estuary;
- Support the restoration of free-flowing waters to benefit water quality, stream habitat and aquatic connectivity in tributary streams of the Estuary;
- Help communities with existing and projected impacts of localized flooding along tributary streams of the Estuary; and
- Conserve for future generations the rich diversity of plants, animals and habitats of the Hudson River estuary ecosystem.

This RFA also addresses state priorities for protection of Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) and for mitigation of damages to natural resources. The priority SGCN under this RFA are river herring and American eel. However, other SGCN species include those that may benefit from tributary restoration projects such as brook trout, wood turtle, northern red salamander, longtail salamander, alewife floater, eastern pearlshell and yellow lampmussel. The complete list can be viewed at: <https://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/7494.html#High>.

2. Definitions

- “Planning” is defined as any activity, such as design (e.g., final and conceptual design, landscape design renderings), engineering, permitting, feasibility study, stakeholder engagement, and/or assessments, which will result in improved likelihood that the barrier will be mitigated to allow passage for herring or eel. Planning does not need to go as far as making the project shovel-ready, but planning that results in a shovel-ready project is eligible to receive extra points in the scoring.
- An “artificial barrier” is a dam, road-stream crossing (culvert or bridge), or instream structure (e.g., exposed sewer line or other legacy hydrologic modification) that impedes the movement or

migration of fish or other aquatic organisms. A naturally-occurring waterfall is not considered to be an artificial barrier, although a dam on top of a natural barrier might still be worthy of removal to meet goals of this RFA.

- A “herring barrier” is any structure which is known to restrict the upstream movement of herring and must be the first barrier upstream of tidal waters.
- “Dam removal” means complete removal/elimination of a dam, or other similar artificial barrier (e.g., utility or sewer crossing), removing from the top of the structure down to the original stream bottom. Although full removal is preferred, partial removal is acceptable, as long as the resulting configuration has the same conveyance as the natural stream channel, and reconnects upstream and downstream stream habitat.

3. Minimum Eligibility (Pass/Fail criteria)

Level 1 Review:

- The applicant must be eligible, as shown on page 5 of 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.
- Location: The project must be located within the defined geographic boundaries of this RFA (see maps in Appendix I). The applicant must provide GPS coordinates of the subject barrier(s), and a map and photos of the current location and condition of the site, uploaded to the Grants Gateway.
- Projects must implement one of the eligible project types identified in this RFA.
- The uploaded project timeline indicates completion on or before January 31, 2026.
- All project funding sources are eligible as defined in this RFA and at least 15% in eligible match is identified.
- If applicable, letters of collaboration are provided from all applicant partners, which must include “Lead” applicant designation.
- Proof of property ownership or landowner permission must be provided as an upload to the application, as outlined in “Required Permissions” on page 14.
- The applicant must provide the required certification for sexual harassment prevention, as required by State Finance Law §139-l.
- The applicant must provide the required certification for Executive Order 16.
- 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 page 47 as a reference.

Level 2 Review:

- Projects must conserve and restore aquatic habitat connectivity for one or both of two Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN)--American eel and river herring. In reviewing applications for eligibility, DEC will rely primarily on information provided by the applicant, but will also use reviewer knowledge, to determine if the proposed habitat improvement will benefit these species.
- The project must be located on a perennial stream.
- Culvert mitigation/right-sizing projects must be designed to pass, at a minimum, a 1% annual chance storm (100-year flood).

4. Project Types (Program Question 6)

Funding must be used to implement one of the following project types to meet the above Project Objectives. Applicants will identify the project type number for the Program Question. Based on eligibility review Level 2, the DEC may require re-assignment of the project type.

For all project types, preference is given to projects that benefit herring and eel, and are in closest

sequential proximity to tidal waters. For example, higher priority will be given to the first dam or barrier upstream from tidal waters than one involving the fourth dam or barrier. This same logic is applied to culverts, where mitigating one closer to the tidal portion of the stream is more beneficial than mitigating one farther upstream. Similarly, the quality of the habitat improvement is considered in the scoring. For example, a second barrier that is upstream of a very large, virtually impassable first barrier offers lower habitat quality improvement than one that is upstream of a dam that eel can more easily ascend. Education, stakeholder engagement, and public outreach about the benefits of this type of habitat restoration and flood mitigation may be included in each project type and is encouraged as a factor in the scoring.

NOTES FOR PROJECT SUPPORT:

For all project types: Applications that demonstrate support from neighboring, upstream and downstream stakeholders and/or local officials has been secured will receive more points (see #12, Local Support & Implementation Commitment on page 15). The highest level of points for local support is available for applications that include letters demonstrating support from the top elected official in the community (e.g. mayor or town supervisor,) and/or adjoining landowners (landowner letters must clearly identify the applicable property through an address and/or coordinates). Also see related scoring on page 35. Support from highway supervisors and/or other key community stakeholders are also considered in the scoring.

Applications that clearly outline how the proposed plans will transition to implementation (i.e., actual dam removal or culvert replacement) will receive higher scores.

Project Type 1, Dam Removal - Planning: A project that proposes engineering/planning to remove a dam affecting eel or herring migration on tributaries, and within tributary watersheds within the geographic boundaries of this RFA. This project type may include planning for removal or mitigation of multiple barriers in a sequence, and may include, in addition to dam removal, mitigation/right-sizing of one or more culverts that are barriers to fish movement as assessed through [NAACC road-stream crossing protocols](#) (rated severe, significant, or No AOP) or that would qualify as such if assessed. Such projects may include landscape design and visualization of the site as it would look after dam removal. Projects which also improve the water quality and/or flood resiliency in the vicinity of the project are encouraged.

To be eligible for multi-barrier planning consideration, the barriers included in the application must be sequential (e.g. the first and second barrier or the second and third barrier to fish movement). Otherwise, they must be submitted as separate applications under this RFA.

All applications for this project type must:

- include some level of documentation of initial reconnaissance to substantiate feasibility of the project (see Program Question 16 and Appendix V);
- address how upstream and downstream hydraulics will be adequately assessed for the size, uses and condition of the affected area downstream and upstream of the dam (artistic renderings may be included as part of this analysis);
- ensure that engineering plans created through this RFA are stamped by a licensed engineer or landscape architect;
- ensure that the proposed deliverables create a shovel-ready project, including securing approved permits;
- include in the timeline a preapplication meeting with NYSDEC Division of Environmental Permits;
- include a plan for upstream and downstream stakeholder outreach and engagement to ensure

successful implementation; and
acknowledge the potential need for future streamside/riparian revegetation and restoration.

Project Type 2. Culvert Mitigation/Right-sizing – Planning: Engineering/design plans for mitigation/right-sizing of a single culvert at a site that is a location for herring or eel habitat, and is a barrier to fish movement as assessed through [NAACC road-stream crossing protocols](#) (rated severe, significant, or No AOP) or would qualify as such, and is a priority of a municipal management plan. Such projects may include visualization of the site as it would look after culvert right-sizing. Projects which also improve the water quality and/or flood resiliency in the vicinity of the project are encouraged.

All applications for this project type must:

- ensure that the proposed deliverables can lead to a shovel-ready project, including securing approved permits;
- address how the hydraulic impacts of culvert mitigation on upstream and downstream properties will be adequately considered for the size, uses and condition of the affected area downstream and upstream of the culvert;
- ensure that the replacement crossing is fully passable to migratory fishes;
- ensure that engineering plans submitted through this RFA are stamped by a licensed engineer; and
- be designed to pass, at a minimum, a 1% annual chance storm (100-year flood).

The priority replacement option for an undersized, perched culvert is a bridge or bottomless arch. If for some reason this isn't possible, the replacement culvert must follow NYSDEC stream crossing standards found at https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/permits_ej_operations_pdf/streamcrossing.pdf. Projects that involve substantial disturbance to stream channels should consider including a task for site restoration, including riparian tree and shrub plantings and bio-stabilization of streambanks.

Use the web map at https://naacc.org/naacc_data_center_home.cfm for detailed information on assessed crossings in the Hudson watershed, and contact DEC staff (corbin.gosier@dec.ny.gov) for help on this requirement.

Project Type 3. Initial Reconnaissance for Feasibility of Dam Removal: A project to conduct initial reconnaissance to assess the scope and challenges of a dam removal may be proposed to determine feasibility of removing a dam or dams. Issues impeding a dam removal may not be fully apparent when proposing a project. Conducting a thorough investigation of the dam's history, background, and neighborhood/adjacent landowner sentiment prior to an engineering and planning stage may be crucial to ensuring future success. Applications for this project type will conduct a thorough evaluation of the subject dam(s), identifying issues that may arise and obstacles to overcome if dam removal was proposed, including alternatives that may need to be considered in lieu of dam removal, and how challenges will be addressed prior to a planning and engineering phase. Such projects may include visualization of the site as it would look after dam removal.

Activities that can be proposed as part of initial reconnaissance include investigating the dam's purpose/use and existing issues, historical significance, identity of the dam owner(s), surveys/deeds of land ownership around the impoundment (tax parcels), evaluating ecological factors such as habitat, native/rare species, and sediment quality, and communicating with and engaging stakeholders and the community about the benefits of dam removal (please refer to Appendix V).

5. Water Quality/Flooding (Program Question 9)

Applicants will be asked to describe the current understanding of water quality of the impacted waterbody, and how the proposed project might improve water quality and reduce a non-point source pollution and/or flooding impact. See the NYSDEC Waterbody Inventory/Priority Waterbodies List and current water quality assessment information at <https://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/36730.html> to answer this program question. Projects with water quality/flooding co-benefits will receive additional points in the scoring (#4 on page 35).

6. Priority Projects

In order to provide the most benefit to target species, priority will be assigned as shown below, which is reflected in the scoring and detailed further starting on page 21 of this RFA.

- **Priority by Project Type**

Projects will first be prioritized by project type:

- Project Type 1 (highest priority)
- Project Type 2 (second priority)
- Project Type 3 (third priority)

All qualifying projects in Project Type 1 will be funded before Project Type 2. Qualifying projects in Project Type 2 will be funded before Project Type 3. If there are no qualifying projects in Type 1, projects in Type 2 will become the highest priority, and so on. See the Application Evaluation, Scoring and Selection starting on page 21 of this RFA for further information.

- **Priority for increase in habitat value (Tier Assignment)**

Projects will then be prioritized based on habitat value, including impact and species benefit. Projects that improve habitat for herring will be eligible for higher points in the scoring. Barrier location from tidal waters is also a substantial factor in the scoring (the first barrier is awarded higher points, followed by the second barrier, and so forth).

Greater points will be awarded to projects that will significantly improve the quality of habitat for the target species (when evaluating the overall scale and design of the project, such as the acres of reconnected habitat, location of the barrier and type of removal). The number of feet/miles of stream reconnected and restored will also be a consideration in the scoring.

7. Action Agenda Measures of Success (Program Question 12)

Describe how the project will help achieve one or more Measures of Success as outlined in the *2021-2025 Hudson River Estuary Action Agenda*. Action Agenda Measures of Success, by Benefit, can be found in Appendix IV of this RFA. *As noted in Appendix IV, reporting for grants arising under this RFA will require updates on how the project is achieving specific Measure(s) of Success.*

8. Project Timeline (Program Question 13)

Applicants **MUST** provide a timeline for meeting project objectives and identified tasks between February 1, 2024 and January 31, 2026. **Project expenditures prior to Master Contract for Grants (MCG) start date and after the MCG end date are not eligible for reimbursement or match.**

All project timelines must include consultation with Program staff for project management purposes as step one in the timeline.

9. Initial Reconnaissance (Program Question 16)

Applications for planning for dam removal (Project Type 1) should provide documentation of initial reconnaissance completed, as well as any pre-work that may remain to be completed as part of the project (see Appendix V for suggested format). Initial reconnaissance does not apply to any other

Project Type, and Appendix V is not required for these other project types.

10. Applicant Partners (Program Question 17)

The Applicant Partner is a collaborator who has a significant role in the project and is fundamentally a co-applicant for the grant regardless of whether or not the partner is included in the budget. Projects involving an Applicant Partner (i.e. multi-partner and inter-municipal projects, page 5) 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.

11. Required Permissions (Program Question 19)

The applicant must own the property, or obtain an applicable access agreement, for the proposed project site. Proof of ownership or permission for work to be conducted on the property is required for **ALL** projects. **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, and the applicant IS NOT a municipality – Proof of ownership, such as a copy of the current deed or a current tax parcel map.
- If the property is owned by the applicant, and the applicant IS a municipality – A resolution by the municipality supporting the project.
- 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 to represent the landowner, to accomplish the proposed project.
- If the property is not owned by the applicant and the property owner is a municipality -
 - i. A resolution by the municipality supporting the project.
OR
 - ii. 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.
OR
 - iii. A letter on municipal letterhead from the municipal chief operating officer providing authorization for the applicant to conduct the proposed project on municipal property.

12. Local Support & Implementation Commitment (Program Question 20)

In addition to documenting the support of the primary property owner, as per the “Required Permissions” above, applicants for planning for dam removal (Project Type 1), are strongly encouraged to secure and demonstrate proof of the support of other local stakeholders whose support may be key to project success (e.g. adjoining property owners, upstream and downstream landowners, sporting/hunting associations, municipal leaders, highway departments, elected officials, watershed councils).

Letters from local stakeholders should be submitted to substantiate project feasibility and implementation commitment and will improve the scoring of an application (higher points are available for applicants submitting such letters). Support letters from the government body offering the grant, or institutions or organizations who are fiscal sponsors and/or will provide services under the grant, will not be considered as “stakeholders,” and no extra points will be awarded for these letters. If stakeholder 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.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to fully address this application requirement and document the level of local support and implementation commitment. Failure to earn any points for this Program Question will result in the application being ranked “Low” (tied to Bonus Points for Minimum Standards [page 16]). Also see Application Evaluation, Scoring and Selection starting on page 21 of this RFA.

13. Outreach & Engagement (Program Question 22)

Outreach or training to help people utilize and engage with the proposed plans, designs or projects may also be included as a task in the work plan, and is strongly encouraged where applicable. This could include identification and communication of social, environmental and economic benefits, including enhanced recreational opportunities, increased property values, ecosystem and habitat improvements, reduction of flood risk, etc.

14. Engagement of Program Staff (Program Question 24)

At a minimum, project timelines must include consultation with Program Staff for project management purposes as step one in the timeline (e.g. a project kick-off meeting). Additionally, applicants are strongly encouraged, but are not required, to invite Program staff to attend stakeholder meetings and to provide technical assistance. An invitation for such additional participation should be included as a step in the project timeline schedule and deliverables (see Program Question 13) to qualify for additional points. Program staff may choose to participate, or not, in response to the invitation, as time allows. Please note that engagement of Program staff is not a substitute for stakeholder engagement by the applicant.

Should an award be made, applicants will be required to connect with the applicable Program Project Manager (to be assigned during the contracting stage) before work is started on the project.

15. Knowledge, Skills and Experience (Qualifications) (Program Question 26)

Applicants must possess the knowledge, skills, and/or track record to successfully implement the project, including any experience with and understanding of aquatic organism passage. Priority is given to applicants with excellent qualifications or a successful track record with this type of project.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to fully address this application requirement. Failure to earn any points for this Program Question will result in the application being ranked “Low” (tied to Bonus Points for Minimum Standards [page 16]). Also see Application Evaluation, Scoring and Selection starting on page 21 of this RFA.

16. Project Cost Effectiveness (Program Question 27)

The cost-effectiveness of the proposed project will be evaluated as provided in the Application Review and Scoring Standards in Appendix III. 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 at least 30% match (above the minimum 15%) may be eligible for additional points for cost effectiveness (see Appendix III). Applicants are encouraged to provide quotes from vendors/contractors for the work to be completed to help justify cost effectiveness. If land easements are proposed as match (see page 25), appraisal documentation must be uploaded for this Program Question 27.

Note the Grants Gateway rounds the match percent **down** to the nearest whole number. For example, if the match calculates at 29.8%, the expenditure summary of the expenditure budget will show a 29% match, not a 30% match. Applications are scored based on the match calculated by the Grants Gateway in the expenditure summary. Be sure to confirm the match percentage in the expenditure summary to ensure the Grants Gateway is calculating the intended match percentage. This is particularly important if you are aiming to propose 30% eligible match or more above the minimum 15%, which is eligible for additional points for cost effectiveness.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to fully address this application requirement. Failure to earn any points for this Program Question will result in the application being ranked “Low” (tied to Bonus Points for Minimum Standards [page 16]). Also see Application Evaluation, Scoring and Selection starting on page 21 of this RFA.

17. Minimum Standards Points for Local Support & Implementation Commitment, Qualifications, and Cost Effectiveness (Program Questions 20, 26, 27)

Applicants receiving points for all of these program questions (PQ #s 20, 26, and 27 in the Grants Gateway) (do not score zero points on any of these questions) will receive 81 points.

Failure to earn these points will result in the application being ranked “Low” (see Application Evaluation, Scoring and Selection starting on page 21 of this RFA).

18. Statewide Priority (Program Questions 28-30)

- **Alignment with Regional Economic Development (REDC) Strategies**

Any grants awarded by the State of New York shall take into consideration the recommendation of the relevant Regional Economic Development Councils (REDC) or the Commissioner’s determination that the proposed project aligns within the regional strategic priorities of the region where the proposed project is located.

For Program Question 28, provide a brief narrative describing the economic benefits of the proposed project and how the project aligns with the strategies of the REDC plan for the project’s region (cite specific sections of the respective REDC plan, as applicable). The narrative must be included with the Application to receive points in the application review. If not applicable to your project, you must answer “N/A” for Program Question 28.

Each region has a unique plan. Visit <http://regionalcouncils.ny.gov/> for information on your region’s Economic Development Council.

- **Priority for Environmental Justice (EJ) Projects**

DEC demonstrates a commitment to Environmental Justice (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, or a project that gives appropriate consideration to under-served urban neighborhoods (all potential neighborhoods whose demographic, geographic, or economic characteristics impede or prevent their access to adequate canopy cover and other benefits of trees) will receive points in the evaluation of an application. Maps of EJ areas in New York State are available at: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/public/911.html>.

To qualify for EJ points, your application must include the following details:

- a.) The exact street location(s) where the project is to be implemented (no P.O. Box) or where the benefit will be provided; or
- b.) A brief description of how the project will benefit underserved 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, 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 one or more county or state appointed or elected officials that are above and beyond those essential to the project (Program Question 20), as evidenced by letters of support uploaded with the application, will receive extra points in the scoring.

19. Expenditure Based Budget

Applicants must complete an itemized budget in the NYS Grants Gateway 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 include appropriate level of information for the breakdown of costs for each budget item (depending on the budget category this information is provided in the budget detail and/or budget narrative). 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.

20. Work Plan

Applicants must complete a work plan in the NYS Grants Gateway that provides a clear overview of the project. Applications must include proposed project objectives, tasks associated with meeting each objective, and the performance measures associated with each task (performance measures should include desired project outcomes or deliverables). The work plan should include anticipated time frames in meeting project objectives, tasks and deliverables. Time frames must be consistent with the timeline applicants are required to upload in the Grants Gateway for Program Question 13.

Note: A Work Plan 'worksheet' is available for applicants in the Grants Gateway (under Pre-submission Uploads). The 'worksheet' can be downloaded and used as a tool to help applicants organize their proposed project objectives, tasks and performance measures. A completed 'worksheet' should NOT be uploaded back into the Grants Gateway. The intent of the 'worksheet' is to assist applicants in developing their application work plan in the Grants Gateway.

21. Quality Assurance

(Required for Water Quality or Sediment Assessment and Monitoring projects)

Quality assurance applies to all programs/projects that involve the collection, generation or use of environmental data associated with the mapping, modeling, monitoring, and assessment of water quality data intended for use by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) for its regulatory purposes. This includes the design or use of water quality focused environmental technology. Guidance and resources for DEC's quality assurance can be found on DEC's quality assurance webpage (<https://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/23850.html>). Activities associated with these types of programs/projects, conducted in the field or laboratory, shall be:

- a. Performed in accordance with an effective quality system for planning and assessing environmental measurements and tests, and for conducting required quality assurance and quality control procedures to promote and maintain the accuracy and reliability of environmental measurements and test results. An effective Quality System includes a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) based on guidance provided by the USEPA Guidance for Quality Assurance Project Plans (QA/G-5 May 2006), or American National Standard ASQ/ANSI E4:2014: Quality management systems for environmental information and technology programs—Requirements with guidance for use, approved February 4, 2014;
- b. The fulfillment of the data verification, validation, and usability component of QAPP is to be documented in a Data Usability Assessment Report (DUAR);
- c. Performed by a laboratory certified by the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH)

under the Environmental Laboratory Approval Program (ELAP) pursuant to Section 502 of the Public Health Law. This requirement shall not apply to specific parameters where NYS DOH ELAP has not issued a certificate for the specific parameter;

- d. Performed in a manner that ensures all requisite quality control and calibration requirements are met, including field testing, sample collection, preservation, and record-keeping. Basic quality assurance and quality control requirements defined in 40 CFR Part 136.7 shall be followed as well as any specific method requirements;
- e. Required to submit environmental monitoring data electronically to US EPA Water Quality Exchange (WQX) following the guidance as set by US EPA's WQX Submission Instructions.
- f. Covered under the Publicity clause (article IV.G.) of the Master Contract for Grants – Standard Terms and Conditions. Specifically, the Contractor agrees that any work products, including but not limited to, water quality data or environmental information; measured, generated, or developed under this contract shall not be released, published, cited, or shared in draft or final form without prior written authorization from the Department; and
- g. At a minimum, performed in accordance with water quality standards in 6 NYCRR Part 703 and/or guidance values in Technical and Operational Guidance Series (TOGS) 1.1.1. Projects designed to assess water quality or inform regulatory decisions must measure parameters with applicable water quality standards and/or guidance values.

Costs related to QAPP development may be included in the budget as needed. *No more than 50% of the grant request may be allocated to monitoring expenses.* A template for the QAPP is provided in the Pre-Submission Uploads section of the Grants Gateway.

22. Pre-Submission Upload: Sexual Harassment Prevention Certification

State Finance Law §139-I requires all applicants of grant funding to certify that they have a written policy addressing sexual harassment prevention in the workplace and provide annual sexual harassment training (that meets the Department of Labor's model policy and training standards) to all its employees.

Where applying for grant funding is required pursuant to statute, rule or regulation, every application submitted to the state or any public department or agency of the state must contain the following statement: "By submission of this application, each applicant and each person signing on behalf of the applicant certifies, and in the case of a partnering application each party thereto certifies as to its own organization, under penalty of perjury, that the applicant has and has implemented a written policy addressing sexual harassment prevention in the workplace and provides annual sexual harassment prevention training to all of its employees. Such policy shall, at a minimum, meet the requirements of section two hundred one-g of the labor law."

Applications that do not contain the certification will not be considered for award; provided however, that if the applicant cannot make the certification, the applicant may provide a signed statement with their application detailing the reasons why the certification cannot be made. After review and consideration of such statement, the Department may reject the application or may decide there are sufficient reasons to accept the application without such certification.

Applicants are required to sign and upload the Sexual Harassment Prevention Certification form or upload a signed statement with their application detailing the reasons why the certification cannot be made into the pre-submission uploads folder.

23. Pre-Submission Upload: Executive Order 16

Executive Order No. 16 provides that "all Affected State Entities are directed to refrain from entering into any new contract or renewing any existing contract with an entity conducting business operations in Russia." The complete text of Executive Order No. 16 can be found at

<https://www.governor.ny.gov/executive-order/no-16-prohibiting-state-agencies-and-authorities-contracting-businesses-conducting>. The Executive Order remains in effect while sanctions against Russia imposed by the federal government are in effect. Accordingly, vendors who may be excluded from award because of current business operations in Russia are nevertheless encouraged to respond to solicitations to preserve their contracting opportunities in case the sanctions are lifted during a solicitation or even after award in the case of some solicitations. As defined in Executive Order No. 16, an “entity conducting business operations in Russia” means an institution or company, wherever located, conducting any commercial activity in Russia or transacting business with the Russian Government or with commercial entities headquartered in Russia or with their principal place of business in Russia in the form of contracting, sales, purchasing, investment, or any business partnership. Vendors responding to this solicitation are required to complete and submit the form entitled “Certification Under Executive Order No. 16 Prohibiting State Agencies and Authorities from Contracting with Businesses Conducting Business in Russia”.

In the Grants Gateway pre-submission upload section of the application, ALL applicants must download, complete and save the Executive Order No. 16 Certification form, prior to uploading the completed form back into the Grants Gateway.

24. Pre-Submission Upload: Smart Growth Infrastructure Policy Act

New York State’s Smart Growth Public Infrastructure Policy Act (ACT), Environmental Conservation Law Article 6, requires the DEC 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 impracticable, 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 is completed as required.

25. 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.

26. Coastal Consistency Requirements

SEQR Type I and Unlisted actions located within the NYS Department of State’s coastal zone boundaries must meet the consistency requirements of the Secretary of State’s Coastal Management Program. This consistency determination will be performed by the Department as part of the grant review process. If the proposed project is located within a municipality that has an approved Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan (LWRP), the policies of that LWRP apply. Projects in other areas will need to be consistent with the State’s 44 coastal policies. The coastal policies can be found at <https://dos.ny.gov/coastal-consistency-review>. Applicants are encouraged to determine if their project is located within the coastal zone, and to include in their site plan or sketch map their project’s location within the coastal zone boundaries if applicable. Maps of the coastal zone boundaries can be found at http://appext20.dos.ny.gov/coastal_map_public/map.aspx.

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 Review and Scoring Standards in Appendix III 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:

Step 1: Application and Project Eligibility Determination

Pass/Fail criteria – please refer to the Application Evaluation and Scoring Standards in Appendix III.

Step 2: Project Evaluation, Scoring and Selection

If your application meets all eligibility pass/fail 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, methods, budget and applicant qualifications; and
- Assessment of the project impact, and priority project eligibility.

All eligible applications will be individually evaluated and scored by at least 3 technical review team members. Technical reviewer scores will be averaged, and statewide priority points will be added to the average score to determine a final composite score.

1. Projects will first be selected based on Project Type (see pages 11-13 for descriptions of the Project Types for each program).
 - Qualifying Type 1 projects will be eligible for funding first, followed by qualifying Type 2 projects, and qualifying Type 3 projects.
2. Projects will first be prioritized in accordance with tier assignment. Based on the average score of the Primary Project Objective Evaluation Criteria #1 on Page 34 of this RFA (corresponds with Program Questions 6, 8, and 10 in the Grants Gateway) applications will be assigned to one of six tiers.
 - Projects that plan to mitigate the first artificial barrier and conserve or restore aquatic habitat connectivity for both river herring AND American eel will be assigned to Tier 1.
 - Projects that plan to mitigate the first artificial barrier and conserve or restore aquatic habitat connectivity for eel (but NOT herring) will be assigned to Tier 2.
 - Projects that plan to mitigate the second artificial barrier and conserve or restore aquatic habitat connectivity for herring and/or eel will be assigned to Tier 3.
 - Projects that plan to mitigate the third artificial barrier and conserve or restore aquatic habitat connectivity for herring and/or eel will be assigned to Tier 4.
 - Projects that plan to mitigate a barrier beyond the third artificial barrier and conserve or restore aquatic habitat connectivity for herring and/or eel will be assigned to Tier 5.
 - Projects that do not meet these criteria will not be deemed eligible for funding (Tier 6).

Tiers are determined as follows:

Primary Project Objective Score Thresholds by Tier		
Tier Number	Lowest Average Score	Highest Average Score
Tier 1	17.0	20.0
Tier 2	14.0	16.9
Tier 3	9.0	13.9
Tier 4	4.0	8.9
Tier 5	1	3.9
Tier 6	0	0.9

- Applications will then be ranked within each tier as high, medium, or low based on the final composite score.

Ranks within Tiers are determined as follows:

Tier Number	Rank		
	High	Medium	Low
Tier 1	215.0-164.0	163.9-127.0	≤126.9
Tier 2	210.0-159.0	158.9-122.0	≤121.9
Tier 3	205.0-154.0	153.9-117.0	≤116.9
Tier 4	200.0-149.0	148.9-112.0	≤111.9
Tier 5	196.0-145.0	144.9-108.0	≤107.9
Tier 6	N/A	N/A	N/A

- Tier placement and rank will be used to determine which projects receive funding within each Project Type. For each Project Type, applications in Tier 1 ranking high will be the first projects selected for funding, followed by Tier 1 projects with a medium rank. Applications in Tiers 2-5 will be selected for funding starting with high ranked applications in each tier, followed by medium ranked applications. Tier 6 applications and all applications ranking low (regardless of tier) will not be funded. Based on the scoring and evaluation process, these projects are deemed to be sufficiently flawed and should not be implemented with state funds.

Tie breaker – If there is a numerical tie in an application’s final score, the application that scores the highest in “Project Objectives and Methods” 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 there is a numerical tie between multiple applications within a funding category, the application that scores the highest in Cost-Effectiveness will determine placement on the ranked list. If a tie remains, the order applications were received will determine placement on the ranked list, with the earliest application placing highest.

Grant Program Payment

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 and end dates. 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 DEC for costs to be eligible for grant reimbursement.

Eligible and Ineligible Expenditures

Eligible Project Expenditures

- Personal Services: 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.) Equipment and other non-property rentals directly required to implement the project.
- Supplies and materials: Directly needed to implement the project.

Ineligible Project Expenditures

- Indirect costs: Overhead or operating expenses (space, real property, rent, utilities, etc.).
- Travel costs
- Equipment Purchase
- 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

Applicants must provide at least **15% in match funds based on the amount of grant funds**. Projects which provide 30% match or more will receive additional points in the scoring.

Formula: $\text{Requested Budget} \times 15\% = \text{Required Match}$

Eligible Forms of Match

- Cash: Includes other grants from non-state or non-federal funding sources.
- Personal Services: Staff salaries devoted to the project, including fringe benefits expenses. Itemize salaries according to job title or job assignment 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.). Equipment and other non-property rentals directly required to implement the project.
- 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 Purchase: 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 under Program Question 27 (Cost Effectiveness and Funding).

Ineligible Forms of Match

- Indirect costs: Overhead or operating expenses (space, real property, rent, utilities, etc.).
- Travel costs
- Other State or Federal funding: Project costs paid from other state and/or federal funding sources.

Grant Program Reporting

Quarterly Narrative Reports must be submitted in narrative form, no later than 30 days from the end of the calendar quarter. The reports will summarize how the project progressed toward meeting project objectives and deliverables during the respective 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 calendar quarter. These reports must correlate to subsequent vouchers submitted for payment.

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.

Final Report must be submitted and approved by the DEC prior to the release of the final contract payment to the Grantee. The Contractor 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 DEC. The final report should include a comparison of data between pre and post construction monitoring, to the extent that monitoring is a project deliverable.

A DEC on-site inspection may be required to confirm all work was completed in accordance to 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.

Projects already receiving funds from another NYS or Federal assistance grant program are not eligible to receive funding for the same project activities identified in this RFA.

What to Expect If You Receive an Award

1. Notification of Award

Applicants selected to receive a grant award will be notified by email and in an official DEC award letter. The NYS Grants Gateway will also provide you with an award status.

IMPORTANT NOTE: By accepting an award, applicant agrees to abide by all MCG terms and conditions. Any changes to the terms and conditions will not be accepted and may affect applicant's award.

2. 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 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 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 DEC until a MCG is fully approved by the DEC, and as applicable the Attorney General and the State Comptroller. All contracts must be approved by the contract start date of which will be determined at the time of an official award.

3. Applicants (referred to as "Contractor" following award of Grant Contract) Should Be Prepared to Comply With the Following MCG Requirements:

a. Insurance Requirements

Contractor will be required to carry appropriate insurance as specified in the MCG, 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. Policies must name the contractor as an additional insured, with appropriate limits, covering contractor's public liability and property damage insurance, contractor's contingency liability

insurance, “all-risk” insurance and workers’ compensation/disability benefits coverage for the project.

b. Signage Requirements (if applicable)

The Department will require project signs for construction projects under this RFA (see Appendix IV for specifications). All signs shall be constructed in accordance with the specifications identified in the Master Contract for Grants (size: 24" wide by 18" high or as appropriate to sign location, construction materials: aluminum blank sign boards with vinyl sheeting). The cost of the sign is a reimbursable project cost and should be included in the “other” category in the expenditure-based budget. The Department may, in its discretion, waive this requirement if the sign cannot be reasonably maintained, the sign is not consistent with other laws, or the location of the sign would not provide a public purpose.

c. 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.

d. State Environmental Quality Review 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 DEC. The Contractor has notified, and shall continue to notify, the DEC of all actions proposed for complying with the environmental review requirements imposed by SEQRA.

e. 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/enroll.htm>, or go directly to the VendRep System at <https://onlineservices.osc.state.ny.us/Enrollment/login?0>.

f. 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.

g. 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 (MCG) 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 (EEO) for minority group members and women and contracting opportunities for certified Minority and Women Owned Business Enterprises (MWBEs). Contractor's demonstration of Good Faith Efforts (GFEs) 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 MWBE 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 MCG - Article IV (J) and Attachment A-1 Program Specific Terms and Conditions - Article X, to review MWBE and EEO requirements.

- 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/searchcertifieddirectory.asp>

MWBE reporting for Department of Environmental Conservation contracts must now be completed using the New York State Contract System (NYSCS). <https://ny.newnycontracts.com/>.

All contracts of \$25,000 or more will be assessed for MWBE goals. Contracts which meet the established MWBE-EEO thresholds require the Contractor to submit the Utilization Plan prior to the execution of the contract and Monthly Compliance Audits in the NYSCS after the contract is executed. To submit the required MWBE Utilization Plan, log-in to NYSCS and access the Utilization Plans section displayed on the user dashboard. Plans requiring action will be displayed in red.

All contractors shall complete an Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Policy Statement and Staffing Plan form and submit it prior to the execution of the contract. These EEO forms are to be uploaded to the Grants Gateway in the grantee document folder.

For more information regarding MWBE compliance and reporting guidelines, and to download required forms, please visit <https://www.dec.ny.gov/about/61016.html#MWBE>.

The following M/WBE-EEO "Fair Share" goals are established as follows:

Minority and Women Owned Business Enterprise (MWBE) Overall Participation Goals:

Construction/Engineering – up to 30%
Commodities – up to 30%
Services/Technologies – up to 30%

DEC M/WBE Compliance
NYS Department of Environmental Conservation
Bureau of Contract and Grant Development/MWBE Program
625 Broadway, 10th Floor
Albany, New York 12233-5028
Mwbe@dec.ny.gov
Phone: (518) 402-9240
Fax: (518) 402-9023

h. Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Business Participation Requirements

The Department is required to implement the provisions of New York State Veteran's Law Article 3. The contractor must make Good Faith Efforts to subcontract a goal of 6% of the contract amount to New York State Certified Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Businesses (SDVOBs), for purposes of providing meaningful participation by SDVOBs.

The contractor is required to complete and submit a SDVOB Utilization Plan detailing how the contractor intends to meet the SDVOB goal. In addition, the contractor must complete and submit quarterly compliance reports detailing the amount spent on SDVOBs in the previous quarter. Please upload all required forms to the Grants Gateway. In addition, all forms and guidance can be located at; [Division of Service-Disabled Veterans' Business Development Compliance and Reporting | Office of General Services \(ny.gov\)](#). Please contact the Department's SDVOB compliance staff with any questions at:

DEC SDVOB Compliance Unit
NYS Department of Environmental Conservation
Bureau of Contract and Grant Development/SDVOB Program
625 Broadway, 10th Floor
Albany, New York 12233-5028
SDVOB@dec.ny.gov
Phone: (518) 402-9240

i. 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.

j. 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

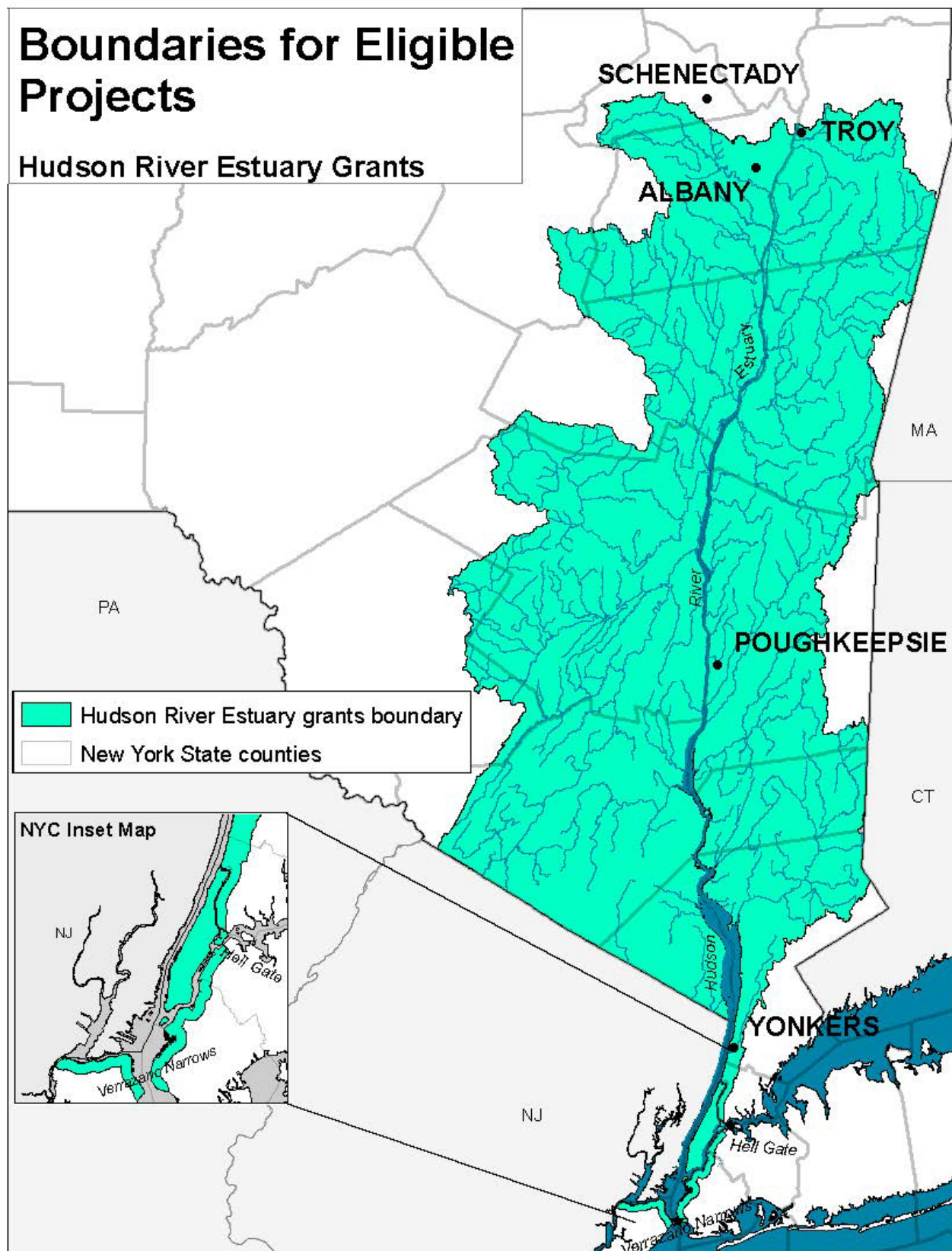
Accessibility Guidelines for Outdoor Recreation Areas <https://www.access-board.gov/guidelines-and-standards>.

k. Diesel Emissions Reduction Act 2006

In 2007, New York State passed legislation establishing the Diesel Emissions Reduction Act 2006 (DERA). This Act amended the Environmental Conservation Law (ECL) by adding Section 19-0323 which requires the use of best available retrofit technology (BART) and ultra-low sulfur diesel fuel (ULSD) for heavy duty vehicles owned or operated by, including on behalf of, state agencies and state or regional public authorities. The Department has promulgated regulations (6 NYCRR Part 248) to provide guidance on provisions of the law. The regulations may be found on the Department's website at <http://www.dec.ny.gov/regs/2492.html>.

If applicable, the contractor must comply with the specifications and provisions of ECL Section 19-0323 and 6 NYCRR Part 248, which require the use of BART and ULSD, unless specifically waived by the Department. Qualifications for a waiver under this law are the responsibility of the Contractor.

Appendix I: Maps of Eligible Project Locations



Appendix II: Budget and Work Plan Guidance

BUDGET

General:

Eligible expenditures for grant and match are noted on pages 23-25 of this RFA.

The following item should be included in the budget (as applicable):

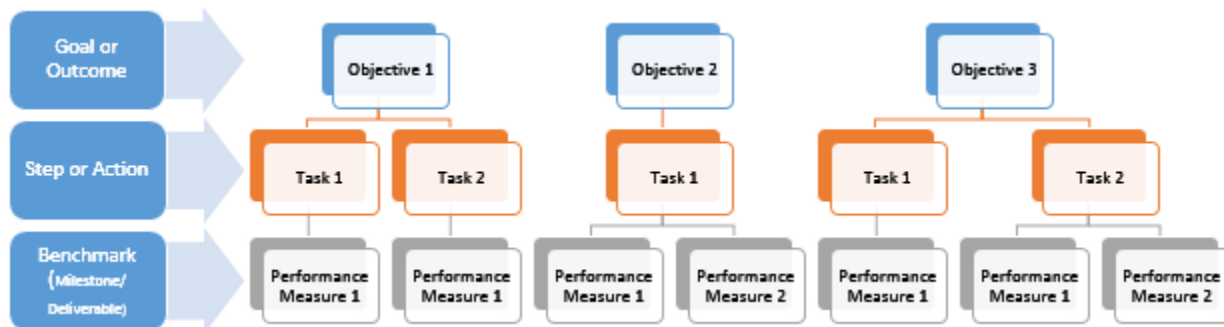
- Projects that include monitoring:

A QAPP is required for all projects that include monitoring. Funds may be allocated toward QAPP development if a QAPP is not submitted at time of application.

WORK PLAN

General:

The Work Plan is an outline of the project plan and consists of Objectives, Tasks, and Performance Measures. Objectives are essentially the goals or outcomes of the project. Tasks are the detailed steps or actions required to meet the Objective. Performance Measures are the benchmarks used to determine if the corresponding task is achieved (often a milestone or deliverable that will identify task completion). The majority of the detail should be included at the task level.



The Work Plan must be input using the Work Plan functionality in the Grants Gateway. Editing the Work Plan in the Grants Gateway can be tedious. You may prefer to develop the Work Plan outside of the Grants Gateway first before inputting into the Work Plan functionality.

A Word Document template, 'Work Plan Worksheet,' is available for download under the 'Pre-Submission Uploads' area of the application in the Grants Gateway. The Worksheet can be used to help organize proposed project objectives, tasks and performance measures. A completed Work Plan Worksheet should NOT be uploaded back into the Grants Gateway. The intention of the document is to be a tool for application development only.

The Work Plan Summary should be a brief Statement of Work that provides an overview of the project. Although the Grants Gateway allows a large number of characters for a response, please keep the summary succinct and brief. The bulk of the information about the project should be input in the Work Plan Detail as Objectives, Tasks, and Performance Measures.

The following items must be included in the Work Plan:

- All Projects:
 - The Work Plan must include a task for consultation with DEC Estuary Program staff for project management purposes at the start of the project.
- For projects that include any sediment or water monitoring:

A QAPP is required for all projects that include any sediment or water monitoring. If a QAPP is not submitted at time of application (see the Pre-Submission Uploads for the template), then QAPP Development must be included in the Work Plan. Example as follows:

OBJECTIVE	TASKS	PERFORMANCE MEASURES
1: Develop QAPP for DEC Review and Approval	a. Draft and Submit QAPP - Draft a QAPP and submit it to DEC's Quality Assurance Officer for review and approval.	i. QAPP Submitted - QAPP is submitted to DEC's Quality Assurance Officer for review and approval.
	b. Approved QAPP - As needed, work with DEC's Quality Assurance Officer to modify QAPP until it is approved.	i. QAPP approved - QAPP is approved by DEC's Quality Assurance Officer, and the remaining Work Plan Objectives can move forward.

Appendix III: Application Evaluation and Scoring Criteria

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

Level 1

- The applicant is eligible as provided on page 5 of 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.
- Location: The project must be located within the defined geographic boundaries of this RFA (see the map in Appendix I). The applicant must provide GPS coordinates of the subject barrier(s), and a map and photos of the current location and condition of the site, uploaded to the Grants Gateway.
- Projects must implement one of the eligible project types identified in this RFA.
- The uploaded project timeline schedule demonstrates completion of project objectives, tasks and deliverables within a two-year contract term.
- All project funding sources are eligible, and at least 15% in eligible matching funds is identified.
- If applicable, letters of collaboration that include the “Lead” applicant designation are provided from all applicant partners.
- Proof of property ownership or landowner permission must be provided as an upload to the application, as outlined in “Required Permissions” on page 14.
- The applicant must provide the required certification for sexual harassment prevention, as required by State Finance Law §139-I.
- Application is complete and all required paperwork is submitted.

Level 2

- Projects must conserve and restore aquatic habitat connectivity for one or both of two Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN)--American eel and river herring. In reviewing applications for eligibility, DEC will rely primarily on information provided by the applicant, but will also use reviewer knowledge, to determine if the proposed habitat improvement will benefit these species.
- The project must be located on a perennial stream.
- Culvert mitigation/right-sizing projects must be designed to pass, at a minimum, a 1% annual chance storm (100-year flood).

PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND TYPEmaximum 40 points

Primary Project Objective (habitat impact, species benefit, and methodology) (maximum 20 points):

1. How well does the project, its location, its method and its deliverables impact the primary objective of this RFA, to conserve and restore habitat for river herring and/or American eel in the watershed?
 - Project will effectively mitigate the first artificial barrier, improving habitat connectivity for both herring and eel.....20 Points
 - Project will effectively mitigate the first artificial barrier, improving habitat connectivity for eel, or herring.....15 Points
 - Project will effectively mitigate the second artificial barrier, improving habitat connectivity for herring and/or eel.....10 Points
 - Project will effectively mitigate the third artificial barrier, improving habitat connectivity for herring and/or eel.....5 Points
 - Project will effectively mitigate an artificial barrier that is beyond the third artificial barrier, improving habitat connectivity for herring and/or eel.....1 Point

- Application meets one or more of the following:
 - (i) one or more aspects of the methodology is flawed in some way that affects meeting the primary RFA objective;
 - (ii) the proposed project method, statement of need, and/or deliverables are insufficiently described to determine objective or impact;
 - (iii) project is not demonstrated to be feasible and/or application does not provide adequate information to determine feasibility; and/or
 - (iv) habitat impact for the target species is marginal or insignificant.
- 0 points

Primary Project Objective (habitat impact and species benefit) (maximum 10 points):

- How much stream habitat is extended upstream from the existing barrier to the next upstream barrier by implementing the project, thereby increasing habitat connectivity for herring or eel?
 - Stream habitat is increased by 5 miles or more..... 10 Points
 - Stream habitat is increased by 1 mile or more, but less than 5 miles..... 7 Points
 - Stream habitat is increased by more than 500 feet, but less than 1 mile..... 5 Points
 - Stream habitat is increased by 500 feet or less..... 3 Points

Primary Project Objective (habitat value and species benefit) (maximum 5 points):

- How well does the overall project scale or design (e.g. location of barrier, width of the stream, type of removal) improve the quality of habitat for the target species?
 - Significant improvement..... 5 Points
 - Average improvement..... 3 Points
 - Marginal or insignificant improvement..... 0 Points

Secondary Project Objective (water quality and flood resiliency) (maximum 5 points):

- How well does the overall project scale or design (e.g. location of barrier, width of the stream, type of removal) improve the water quality and/or flood resiliency in the vicinity of the project?
 - Significant improvement..... 5 Points
 - Average improvement..... 3 Points
 - Marginal or insignificant improvement..... 0 Points

PROJECT SUCCESS FACTORS.....maximum 36 points

Local Support and Implementation Commitment (maximum 15 points):

- How well does the project demonstrate the support of local officials, adjoining landowners and other stakeholders whose support is essential for the project to succeed? Does application demonstrate support as described below? Have concerns from potential upstream and downstream project opponents been addressed through outreach and engagement? Do projects demonstrate support and commitment to implement?
 - Local support indicates project success is very likely, and is thoroughly documented. Letters of support **include** letters from:
 - adjoining property owner(s) (landowner letters clearly identify the applicable property);
 - AND**
 - the top local elected official; **AND**
 - other stakeholders such as upstream and downstream landowners, other municipal leaders, highway departments, sporting/hunting associations, engaged stakeholder organizations.

Project also demonstrates a clear path to implementation.

-15 points
- Local support indicates project success is very likely, and is thoroughly documented. Letters of support **include** letters from:
 - adjoining property owners (landowner letters clearly identify the applicable property);
 - OR**
 - the top local elected official; **OR**
 - other stakeholders such as upstream and downstream landowners, other municipal leaders, highway departments, sporting/hunting associations, engaged stakeholder organizations.

Project also demonstrates a clear path to implementation.

-8 points
 - Letters are not provided, but acceptable support and engagement strategies are demonstrated, and local stakeholders are identified in the narratives, indicating project success is likely and plans are likely to be implemented.....4 points
 - Known, crucial local stakeholders are not engaged, or local support appears insufficient to assure project success, and/or application does not identify a commitment to implement the project.....0 points
- Note applications that receive a zero score for this question will not be eligible for Minimum Standards Points below. As a result, the application will not score well enough to be considered for funding.*

Outreach and Engagement (maximum 8 points):

6. Does the project include outreach or training to help the public engage with the proposed plans, designs or projects, that will likely contribute to success of the project? Such outreach should address social, environmental and economic benefits, such as enhanced recreational opportunities, increased property values, ecosystem and habitat improvements, or reduction of flood risk, etc.
 - The application work plan and project timeline describe outreach and/or training activities on social, environmental and economic benefits that will likely contribute to success of the project.....8 points
 - At least one acceptable outreach or training activity is described in the application work plan and project timeline.....3 points
 - No.....0 points

Engagement of Program Staff (maximum 5 points):

7. How are Program Staff engaged in the proposed project?
 - Project timeline demonstrates early consultation with Program staff and offers an invitation to attend stakeholder meetings and to provide technical assistance in the planning process.....5 points
 - Project timeline only demonstrates early consultation with Program Staff, but does not offer an invitation to attend stakeholder meetings and to provide technical assistance in the planning process.....2 points
 - Program Staff engagement is vague or not defined or invitation to participate is late in the process.....0 points

Knowledge, Skills and/or Experience (maximum 8 points):

8. 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.....8 points
 - Very well qualified and/or established track record for this type of project.....6 points

- Qualified and/or satisfactory track record.....4 points
 - Not well qualified and/or has a poor track record.....0 points
- Note applications that receive a zero score for this question will not be eligible for Minimum Standards Points below. As a result, the application will not score well enough to be considered for funding.*

PROJECT COST EFFECTIVENESS.....maximum 43 points

9. How well does the budget demonstrate value for cost? Cost effectiveness will be evaluated from the standpoint of habitat value, percent of matching funds, and overall value for cost. If applicable, provide justification for costs that may be deemed to exceed what is customary for the work to be completed. 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.
- Highest value for cost: Projects that meet all of the following criteria will score 43 points:
 - i. Habitat value and species benefit is “significant” (based on score from #3 above); **AND**
 - ii. Project provides 30% match or more; **AND**
 - iii. 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.
 - Excellent value for cost: Projects that meet both of the following two criteria will score 30 points:
 - i. Either: (a) Project provides 30% match or more, but habitat value is “average” (based on score of #3 above); **OR** (b) Project does not provide 30% match or more, but habitat value and species benefit is “significant” (based on score from #3 above); **AND**
 - ii. 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: Project does not provide 30% match or more, and habitat impact is average (based on score of #3 above). However, 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. (15 points)
 - Project is not cost effective: Budget is unreasonable, not cost-effective, is confusing, extraneous, excessive or not well aligned with the project purpose, regardless of habitat impact (based on score of #3 above) **OR** “Marginal or insignificant improvement” habitat value (based on score of #3 above) will result, regardless of project cost or match. (0 points)
- Note applications that receive a zero score for this question will not be eligible for Minimum Standards Points below. As a result, the application will not score well enough to be considered for funding.*

MINIMUM STANDARD POINTS.....maximum 81 points
POINTS for meeting minimum standards for local support & implementation, qualifications, and cost effectiveness):

10. Does applicant receive points in local support & implementation, qualifications, and cost effectiveness? Projects which receive a score of zero in any one of these scoring categories will

not meet the minimum standards for funding.

- Yes 81 points
- No 0 points

STATEWIDE PRIORITY POINTSmaximum 15 points

Regional Economic Development Plan:

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

- If yes, add5 points

Environmental Justice:

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

- If yes, add5 points

Community Support:

13. Above and beyond essential project support (Program Question 30), does the application demonstrate support from one or more county or state appointed or elected officials?

- If yes, add5 points

TOTAL ELIGIBLE POINTS215 points

Appendix IV: Reporting on Measures of Success

As part of reporting requirements for a grant under this RFA, grantees will be expected to report on how their project is helping achieve the Measures of Success outlined in the [2021-2025 Hudson River Estuary Action Agenda](#). Measures of Success, by Benefit, are bulleted below. Benefit(s) that apply to this specific grant opportunity are **highlighted in yellow**.

A Vital River Ecosystem

1. Benefit: Sustainable estuarine fisheries

- By 2025, our understanding of Atlantic sturgeon spawning habitat locations and seasonal habitat use has been refined, **the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) Atlantic sturgeon management plan has been implemented, and sturgeon are making measurable progress toward interim recovery goals**. By 2030, they are on track to meet 2050 management goals for sustainable fisheries developed by the ASMFC.
- By 2025, river herring populations are at sustainable levels, **and by 2030, that status has continued**.
- By 2025, factors contributing to the failure of American shad populations to recover have been determined, and a shad management plan with identified benchmarks has been adopted. **By 2030, shad are making measurable progress toward interim recovery goals**.
- **Annually**, the “Best Technology Available” standard has been implemented or scheduled in order to minimize or avoid fish kills at industrial and municipal facilities that use water withdrawals for non-contact cooling, and for **the remaining** steam electric power plants.
- By 2025, **an index** of abundance for the Hudson River striped bass spawning stock has been developed. **Factors contributing to the recent decline of striped bass populations have been determined and are actively being managed in accordance with the ASMFC management plan. By 2030, striped bass show a reverse in the apparent decline in size and number of spawning adult females**.
- By 2025, a black bass management plan has been developed and implemented, **and by 2030, black bass are sustainably managed**.
- By 2025, contaminants (PCBs, dioxins, cadmium) in blue crab have been reduced to levels at or approaching safety for human consumption, as established by the New York State Department of Health (DOH), **and by 2030, contaminant level remain at or below these levels**.
- By 2025, **plans are in place to address potential invasions of invasive/exotic fauna**, and by 2030, they have been minimized through preventive measures **such as education, outreach, regulatory efforts, and control projects**.

2. Benefit: Robust river habitats

- **By 2025, geospatial data on contaminants and habitat value are integrated to prioritize removal of contaminated source areas that can affect ecosystem function. By 2030, prioritized areas are actively being remediated**.
- By 2025, **invasive species infestations and pathways have been identified and prioritized**, with treatments proposed or implemented, **where feasible**, and monitored for success. By 2030, newly discovered invasive species have been treated to prevent establishment.
- By 2025, **habitat value (increased structural complexity and vegetation) has been increased for at least one new mile of shoreline, and by 2030, the number of new miles has doubled, an increase over the 2015 baseline of 3,250 linear feet of habitat value increased to date through sustainable shoreline best management practices (BMPs)**.
- By 2025, **20 new acres of shallow/intertidal habitats have been enhanced or restored, and 30 acres by**

2030, an increase over the baseline of 103 acres restored since 2005.

- **By 2025, 375 new acres of floodplain pathway for wetland migration have been conserved by New York State, and by 2030, that number has doubled to provide future habitat in response to sea-level rise.**
- **By 2025, 10 new acres of oyster habitat have been enhanced/restored in Hudson River Park's Estuarine Sanctuary, and by 2030, 50 new acres of oyster habitat have been enhanced/restored in the brackish waters of the estuary, an increase over the 2020 baseline of 16 acres restored to date in the NY/NJ Harbor and the Tappan Zee reach of the estuary.**

3. Benefit: Clean Hudson River water

- **By 2025, updated water quality monitoring has been completed using accepted DEC methods, and any trends of concern have been identified. By 2030, a characterization is complete, and plans have been developed to address such concerns.**
- **By 2025, all permittees with chronic SSOs are in compliance with permits, consent orders, and associated schedules, and by 2030, they are implementing corrective plans if required.**
- **By 2025, all nine permittees with CSOs are on schedule to meet their priority Long Term Control Plan (LTCP) actions, and by 2030, all nine are making progress in addressing overflows to attain water quality standards.**
- **By 2025, 15 wastewater infrastructure improvement and stormwater management projects are underway that address priority water quality and resilience concerns within tidal tributary mouths, the Hudson mainstem, and river cities, and by 2030, that number has doubled to 30 projects underway.**

A Thriving & Resilient Watershed

1. Benefit: Healthy tributaries

- **By 2025, the stream segments of three or more watersheds have been fully assessed to identify potential water quality impairments, and by 2030, a Nine Element Watershed (9E) plan, a TMDL, or a plan for the development of BMPs that address impaired waters is underway in 5 tributaries with impacted stream segments.**
- **By 2025, five or more new miles of streamside vegetation have been planted, and revegetation goals have been established that indicate effectiveness of streamside plantings. By 2030, that number has doubled, with a cumulative total of 35 miles since the Trees for Tribes program began in 2007, with at least 5 miles demonstrating effectiveness.**
- **By 2025, culverts have been assessed in 75% of the watershed, sites have been prioritized for restoring connectivity and resiliency, and implementation has started to restore 5 miles of habitat in priority locations. By 2030, 25 miles of stream have been restored through dam removal and culvert replacement. (At the start of 2021, 60% of the culverts in the watershed were assessed.)**
- **By 2025, 10 watersheds have one or more of the following: a watershed-based assessment, characterization, intermunicipal cooperative agreement, management plan, Drinking Water Source Protection Program plan, stream habitat study, or flood risk and mitigation studies (e.g., Resilient NY flood studies). By 2030, that number is doubled.**
- **By 2025, all permittees with chronic SSOs are in compliance with permits, consent orders, and associated schedules, and by 2030, they are implementing corrective plans, if required.**
- **By 2025, at least 1,000 acres have been conserved for source water protection, and by 2030 that number has tripled. Watershed protection is encouraged for drinking water protection, including an emphasis on Environmental Justice communities.**

2. Benefit: Climate-adaptive communities

- By 2025, 100 new Climate Smart Communities (CSC) adaptation and resilience actions have been completed that increase adaptive capacity and physical climate resilience, and by 2030, 250 have been completed. (Baseline is zero. Measurement is for new projects started after January 1, 2021.)
- By 2025, 10 communities have completed Climate-Adaptive Design Phase I (Engaged Studio), or a similar process, and 5 have completed Phase II (Design Advancement). By 2030, 15 communities have completed Phase I, or a similar process, and 10 have completed Phase II. (Baseline is five Phase 1s and two Phase 2s completed as of January 2021.)
- By 2025, 27 (10%) local governments are working together in the Flood Resilience Network, and by 2030, 53 (20%) local governments are working together in the Flood Resilience Network. (Baseline is 14 local governments or 5%, as of January 2021.)
- By 2025, 100% of new adaptation plans include **natural and nature-based solutions and consider** social equity factors and are developed using inclusive **engagement best practices**. **By 2030, this has continued annually.** (Baseline is zero. Measurement is for new projects started after January 1, 2021.)

3. Benefit: Conserved natural areas for wildlife, source water, climate resilience, and scenery

- By 2025, at least 12,000 acres of natural area in the watershed, including 2,000 acres along the estuary, have been newly conserved by New York State and partners. By 2030, those numbers increase to 20,000 and 3,000 acres, **respectively. (At the start of 2021, approximately 617,000 acres, or 18% of the watershed, were protected.)**
- By 2025, five **new** planning projects have been completed to support landscape-scale **conservation, regional biodiversity priorities**, and habitat connections (e.g., core forests, stream corridors, wetland complexes, source watersheds). **By 2030, the number of completed connectivity planning projects increases to 10.**
- By 2025, two municipalities in the watershed have successfully established **new** local land acquisition programs (e.g., Community Preservation Act or open space **bond**) **for** the protection of conservation priorities, and by **2030, that number increases to five municipalities.**
- By 2025, new or updated conservation practices, plans, and policies have been completed in 25 municipalities, including 10 in Significant Biodiversity Areas, on the estuary shoreline, or in other areas identified as conservation **and/or environmental justice priorities**, and by **2030, those numbers increase to 50 and 20, respectively.**
- By 2025, **40%** of municipalities with natural resource inventories (NRIs) **completed since 2015** have used their NRIs for a **conservation plan or policy (e.g., open space plan or conservation overlay zone) or comprehensive plan**. **By 2030, that number increases to 50%. (At the start of 2021, 30% of the 20 NRIs completed since 2015 were used in a plan or policy.)**

People Living Well With Nature

1. Benefit: An informed and engaged public

- Annually, at least 80% of educators trained will implement or intend to use our professional development content in their classrooms.
- By 2025, **effective curricula and programs have engaged 125,000 students, educators, volunteers, and decision-makers in Hudson River environmental education**, and by 2030, that number has doubled, **(an increase over our previous engagement of 100,000 people for the period 2015–2020)**
- By 2025, at least 10,000 people have participated in **community science and public programs focused on the Hudson River and its watershed—an increase over our 2020 baseline of 2,000 annually—and by 2030, that number has doubled.**

- By 2025, at least 30% of participants who have been engaged in education programs delivered by the Estuary Program or through grants and technical assistance to partners are from environmental justice areas—an increase over the 25% 2020 baseline—and by 2030, that number has doubled.
- By 2025, **10 or more** locally based facilities for learning about the river have been enhanced with state-of-the-art exhibits, **as well as improved programs, materials, and visitor experiences, and by 2030, continued investments are made in enhancing these 10 facilities, sustaining our 2015–2020 level of support with deeper engagement at participating facilities.**
- By 2030, up to 25% of school districts in the estuary watershed, and 50% of districts that border the shoreline, have participated in **river studies at multiple grade levels or in-depth study within a grade, sustaining our 2015–2020 level of support with deeper engagement at participating schools.**

2. Benefit: An accessible Hudson River for people of all ages and abilities

- By 2025, accessibility **for people of all ages and abilities** has been improved at 10 new or existing Hudson River estuary and harbor access sites **by the State and partners**, and by 2030, accessibility has been improved at a minimum of 20 **new or existing sites, with 50% having the ability to serve (via location or programmatically) disadvantaged communities, sustaining or exceeding our 2015–2020 level of support.**
- By 2025, ecologically sound flood-resiliency plans have been developed for 10 access sites in the anticipated 2050 floodplain, **with 50% being in underserved areas, an increase over the 2020 baseline number of four such sites. Implementation of resilience practices is underway at three sites by 2025. By 2030, those numbers have doubled.**

Appendix V: Documentation of initial reconnaissance of dam removal

For Dam Removal Planning Projects Only; Complete as much as possible

1. Dam name & owner(s)
2. Dam's current purpose & location
3. Land ownership around impoundment (refer to tax parcel maps if necessary)
4. Ecological benefits of removal
5. Community benefits of removal
6. Existing dam issues (dam safety reports, current structural deficiencies, etc.)
7. Infrastructure issues: does the dam or its removal have any known implications for nearby critical infrastructure such as bridges or utilities)
8. Rare species or habitats that may be impacted by removal (refer to the [Hudson Valley Nat. Resource Mapper](#))
9. Historical or cultural resources: are there any historic resources at the project site that may be impacted by dam removal; consider evaluating historic resource impacts using the [Cultural Resource Information System web tool](#) or by contacting the State Historic Preservation Office at 518-268-2166).
10. Sediment quality and quantity: Although laboratory analysis of impoundment sediments and a rough estimate of the total volume of impoundment sediments would be ideal (see Appendix VI for a list of recommended analytes and associated toxicity thresholds), for the initial reconnaissance stage, consideration of current/past upstream land uses that may be contaminant sources or reference to existing WQ data is sufficient. Applicants should consider consulting the [DECinfo Locator](#) to evaluate potential upstream contaminant sources.
11. Community concerns (documenting any initial perceived or known concerns or support from the surrounding or downstream community)

Appendix VI: Sediment Sampling

The following information is provided to guide applicants through preliminary sediment sampling. Additional sampling may be required by NYSDEC Division of Environmental Permits.

The necessity and thoroughness of sediment sampling is highly site-specific. In cases where there is little reason to suspect the presence of contaminants (e.g. upstream watershed is undeveloped forest with no history of industry) and impoundment sediments are coarse (i.e. >90% sand & gravel), sediment sampling is likely not necessary. Likewise, it is likely not necessary to sample sediments in very small dams & impoundments with negligible sediment volumes accumulated (<100yds³). The [US Bureau of Reclamation](#) suggests that impoundments have negligible sediment volume if the following two criteria are met:

- The normal reservoir width (W_{res}) is not more than 1.5 times the typical river width (W_{ch}) in an alluvial reach of stream: $W_{res} \leq 1.5 W_{ch}$
- The hydraulic height of the dam (H_{dam}) (reservoir water surface elevation minus the downstream river water surface elevation) is not more than the typical bankfull depth (H) of the stream channel in an alluvial reach: $H_{dam} \leq H_{bank}$

Applicants are encouraged to collect and analyze sediments for larger dam removal projects with significant fine-grained sediments and a reasonable probability of contaminants. This includes at least 3 sediment cores collected from the fine-grained portion of the impoundment sediments (i.e., nearest the dam), as well as one additional surficial sample both upstream and downstream of the impoundment (outside the influence of the dam). The exact number and location of sediment samples should be determined during the permit pre-application meeting. Applicants are encouraged to refer to the USFWS [Standard Operating Procedures for Sediment Sampling Behind Dams](#) and the NYSDEC [Screening and Assessment of Contaminated Sediment](#) documents for guidance on sediment collection methods. Lab analyses should be performed by a laboratory certified by the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) under the Environmental Laboratory Approval Program (ELAP) pursuant to Public Health Law 502 (unless no ELAP certificate is issued for a specific parameter).

The following recommended parameters and threshold values are derived from “Sediment Quality Threshold Values for Dredging, Riparian or In-water Placement” ([NYSDEC TOGS 5.1.9](#)), the [Screening and Assessment of Contaminated Sediment](#) guidance document and the [NYSDEC Soil Remediation Tables](#), which determines restrictions for upland disposal of sediments. To help determine the feasibility of mobilizing impoundment sediments downstream (which can greatly reduce project cost), applicants are encouraged to compare lab results to any existing sediment quality data from the proposed receiving waterbody, which is may be the Hudson mainstem itself. Historic sediment quality data for the Hudson River mainstem can be accessed by consulting the attribute data for the nearest sampling point in the “Hudson River Estuary Sediments” point shapefiles available at: <http://gis.ny.gov/gisdata/inventories/details.cfm?DSID=1136>.

Recommended parameters and threshold values for preliminary sediment sampling (derived from “Sediment Quality Threshold Values for Dredging, Riparian or In-water Placement” (NYSDEC TOGS 5.1.9) and the 6 NYCRR Part 375 Soil Remediation Tables.

Parameter		Required Detection Limits (mg/kg)	Class A Threshold Values (mg/kg)	Class B Threshold Values (mg/kg)	Class C Threshold Values (mg/kg)	NY- Unrestricted	NY- Residential
Physical Properties	Grain Size - % passing 200#	---	NE	NE	NE	---	---
	Total Organic Carbon	---	NE	NE	NE	---	---
Metals	Arsenic	3.0	<14	14 - 53	>53	13	16
	Cadmium	1.0	<1.2	1.2 - 9.5	>9.5	2.5	2.5
	Copper	5.0	<33	33 - 207	>207	50	270
	Mercury	0.2	<0.17	0.17 - 1.6	>1.6	0.18	NA
	Lead	2.0	<33	33 - 166	>166	63	400
Petroleum Compounds	Benzene	0.0003	<0.59	0.59 - 2.16	>2.16	0.06	2.9
	Total BTX	0.0008	<0.96	0.96 - 5.9	>5.9	NA	NA
	Total PAH	0.33	<4	4 - 35	>35	NA	NA
Pesticides	Sum DDT+DDE+DDD	0.0033	<0.003	0.003 - 0.03	>0.03	NA	NA
	Chlordane	0.0017	<0.003	0.003 - 0.036	>0.036	0.094	0.91
	Dieldrin	0.0033	<0.11	0.11 - 0.48	>0.48	0.005	0.039
Chlorinated Hydrocarbons	Sum of PCB aroclors	0.033	<0.1	0.1 - 1	>1	0.1	1
	Dioxin (Toxic Equivalency Total)	0.000002	<0.0000045	0.0000045 - 0.00005	>0.00005	NA	NA

Note that there are guidelines for individual PAH concentrations in Part 375 6.8(a) Soil Cleanup Objective tables

A rough estimate of the total volume of the impoundment sediment (V_{sed}) can be estimated by computing the area of the deposit and multiplying it by half the estimated maximum depth of the impoundment (H_{max} , typically near the dam) measured via soundings ([USBR – Dam Removal Analysis Guidelines](#)). Area can be computed by multiplying the length of the deposit (L_D) times its width (W_D) or by measuring the surface area of the deposit/impoundment (using GIS software or Google Earth):

$$V_{sed} = \left(\frac{H_{max}}{2} \right) L_D W_D$$

After an applicant receives funding, a preapplication meeting, with the Division of Environmental Permits, is required for Planning projects (Type 2), and is encouraged as one of the concluding steps of Initial Reconnaissance projects (Type 4). The purpose of the pre-application meeting is to clarify the sampling, testing, and permitting and/or regulatory procedures at the earliest stage of project development. Pre-application meetings can be more productive and informative, if applicants are able to provide the results of initial sediment testing.

Refer to Section 19. Quality Assurance (Required for Water Quality or Sediment Assessment and Monitoring projects) for sediment monitoring quality requirements.

Appendix VII: Certification for Sexual Harassment Prevention

Attachment S

Sexual Harassment Prevention Certification Form

By submission of this application, each applicant and each person signing on behalf of any applicant certifies, and in the case of a partnering application each party thereto certifies as to its own organization, under penalty of perjury, that the applicant has and has implemented a written policy addressing sexual harassment prevention in the workplace and provides annual sexual harassment prevention training to all of its employees. Such policy shall, at a minimum, meet the requirements of section two hundred one-g of the labor law.

Company Name: _____

Signature: _____

Print Name and Title: _____

Date: _____

If the above certification cannot be made, the applicant must submit a signed statement below detailing the reasons why the certification cannot be made.

Company Name: _____

Signature: _____

Print Name and Title: _____

Date: _____

Appendix VIII: Application Checklist

- **PASS/FAIL CRITERIA**

(Check the following boxes (☒) to indicate the item is addressed in the application, or is N/A)

1. ☐ Applicant is registered in the Grants Gateway as an eligible applicant for this program.
2. ☐ *NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS*: Applicant is prequalified in the Grants Gateway by the application due date.
3. ☐ Project is located within the defined geographical boundaries of this RFA, and a map, and photos of the current location and condition of the site are uploaded.
4. ☐ Project implements one of the specified eligible project types under the applicable program.
5. ☐ Project timeline indicates completion of project objectives, tasks and deliverables within a two-year contract term.
6. ☐ All project funding sources are eligible as defined in this RFA and at least 15% in eligible match has been identified.
7. ☐ If applicable, letters of collaboration are provided for all applicant partners.
8. ☐ Property permissions are provided.
9. ☐ Project conserves and restores aquatic habitat connectivity for one or both of two Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN)--American eel and river herring.
10. ☐ Project is located on a perennial stream.
11. ☐ Project is designed to pass a minimum 1% annual chance storm (100-year flood) or better. (Project Type 2)
12. ☐ The required certification for sexual harassment prevention is uploaded (Mandatory Upload in Pre-Submission Uploads section in the Grants Gateway).
13. ☐ The required certification for Executive Order 16 is uploaded (Mandatory Upload in Pre-Submission Uploads section in the Grants Gateway).
14. ☐ 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)

1. ☐ 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. ☐ Program Question 1: Location map showing stream(s) and location(s) to be addressed.
- b. ☐ Program Question 5: Pictures of the site that establish the current conditions.
- c. ☐ Program Question 13: A project timeline, showing project start date of February 1, 2024 with a completion date of January 31, 2026.
- d. ☐ Program Question 16: Documentation of initial reconnaissance for dam removal (HRE Project Type 1)

Optional uploads, as applicable:

- a. ☐ Program Question 20: Letters of support as evidence of local stakeholder support.
 - b. ☐ Program Question 27: Documentation (i.e. vendor quotes) for cost-effectiveness.
 - c. ☐ Program Question 30: Letters demonstrating "above and beyond" community support.
2. ☐ The expenditure-based budget is completed, including justifications for all budget items.
 3. ☐ The work plan is provided with clear objectives, tasks, and performance measures.

- **MANDATORY UPLOADS (found in Pre-submission Uploads section in the Grants Gateway)**

1. ☐ *Smart Growth Assessment Form* has been completed and uploaded into the Grants Gateway.
2. ☐ This *Application Checklist* is completed and uploaded into the Grants Gateway.

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