

NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

Division of Lands and Forests

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2018 Trees for Tribes Grant Program (Round 1)

Q&A – Updated August 23, 2018

(Newer questions have been added to the bottom of this list)

1. Can projects be on private land?

Yes, but applicants wishing to plant on private land must describe the public benefits provided by their project and show landowner permission.

2. Does an applicant need to indicate that a DEC Forester, certified arborist or natural resource professional will be used or can that occur later on when applicants are awarded a grant?

These professionals can be consulted after the grant has been awarded, however, you will need to have their expertise during the project development in order to have a successful application. To apply for the grant, an applicant must include native plant selections, planting techniques, planting plans and maintenance plans -- all which must be either created by or approved by one of the above professionals.

Please refer to page 10 of the RFA, under the section titled "Professional Guidance" -- "Applicants must possess the knowledge and skills to successfully implement the project. A letter illustrating professional guidance received from a DEC Forester, certified arborist, or natural resource professional must be uploaded to Grants Gateway. This professional must have provided guidance on native plant species selection, planting techniques and reviewed planting plans for each planting site. Applicants must provide a plant list of New York native trees and shrubs to be approved by DEC staff, certified arborist, or natural resource professional prior to projects being implemented".

Also, please refer to page 10 of the RFA, under the section titled: "Maintenance Plan" -- "Applicants including a maintenance plan for each project site to ensure successful establishment of forested buffers and their long-term maintenance will receive more points in the evaluation. All maintenance plans must follow the activities as outlined in the "RECOMMENDED MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR NYS DEC TREES FOR TRIBES RIPARIAN PLANTING PROJECTS" in Appendix 2 of this RFA".

3. Does DEC have a list of banned and/or invasive trees and shrubs?

Please refer to DEC's web page on [Invasive Species Regulations](#).

This page includes a link to our "[New York State Prohibited and Regulated Invasive Plants](#)" booklet as well as a [printable list of prohibited and regulated invasive species](#) along with some frequently asked questions.



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On page 13 of the RFA there are links to help you build your native tree and shrub list. Call your local DEC forester if you have questions about invasive species and/or tree and shrub diversity.

4. Are colleges and universities eligible to apply?

Yes, colleges and universities (except for-profit colleges) are eligible to apply.

5. Can an individual citizen apply?

No, but individuals interested in riparian planting are encouraged to partner with a local not-for-profit organization, municipality, or university. Individuals can also contact the Trees for Tribes Statewide Coordinator to assist them in finding a potential not-for-profit-organization, municipality, or university. Email the Trees for Tribes Statewide Coordinator at: treesfortribs@dec.ny.gov

6. How do I apply in the Grants Gateway?

Applications must be submitted through the [Grants Gateway website](#). Webinars on how to apply for a grant are currently offered twice per week -- for more information, visit Grants Gateway's [Training Calendar](#).

7. Does my not-for-profit need to be registered in order to apply for a grant?

All charitable organizations operating in New York State are required by law to register and file annual financial reports with the Charities Bureau of the Attorney General's Office. If you have not completed all your requirements with the Charities Bureau, a contract cannot be executed. Please make sure that all registration and annual filing is completed in a timely manner to avoid delays in the case of a grant award. For more information, please visit the [Charities Bureau's webpage](#).

8. Can an Indian Nation apply to the grant?

Yes, Indian Nations are eligible for the Trees for Tribes Grant under the category of municipality. Municipality is defined on page 9 of the Trees for Tribes RFA as: "a public authority or public benefit corporation, a county, city, town, village, soil and water conservation district, 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".

9. I'd like to plant 1-2 trees on our church property. Our church is located in a residential community, but is not located near a stream -- are we eligible for this grant?

This grant program is for larger tree planting activities along a stream edge (riparian zone), so you would not be eligible based on your 1-2 tree request and your site would also have to be along a stream. However, if there's a school within your church property you might be eligible for the [School Seedling Program](#).

10. I was wondering if we (as part of a State Agency: Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation) could apply for Trees for Tribs funding for tree plantings around a freshwater pond?

State Agencies are not eligible for this grant opportunity. However, a 501C3 such as a "Friends of a Park" organization may apply on behalf of a park.

Applications for tree planting along ponds will be considered. Appendix 2 of the RFA states: "Sites must be riparian areas, which includes any areas within the floodplain or within 300 feet of a stream. However, the planting area should not be separated from the stream by a road, structure, stormwater pond or other man-made structures. Buffers along lakes, ponds and wetlands may also be considered".

11.. I am having difficulty determining whether we fall into the eligible watersheds. Could you please advise?

If you are unsure which watershed your project is located, please contact the Trees for Tribs Statewide Coordinator at 518-402-9405 to determine if your project is within an eligible watershed.

If your project is located within the Hudson River Estuary Watershed, your project is not eligible for this Trees for Tribs Grant program, but may be eligible for the [Hudson River Estuary Trees for Tribs Program](#).

If your project is located within the NYCDEP Watershed, West of Hudson, your project is not eligible for this Trees for Tribs Grant program, but may be eligible for the [Catskill Streams Buffer Initiative program](#).

12. Does the RFP for the Trees for Tribs grant program come out annually?

Yes, it is anticipated that the Trees for Tribs grant program will be offered each year.

13. I'm interested in applying for the Trees for Tribs grant opportunity for a property that is located on Peconic Bay on Long Island. I noticed the RFA says that the project must be along a stream. Would a project located on bay front property be eligible for this grant?

The intent of this grant opportunity is planting along freshwater streams and creeks, so planting along the Peconic Bay would not be eligible for funding.

14. Are there application instructions for this grant, other than the RFA? If so, where are these instructions located?

For instructions specific to the questions on this grant application, please view the recording of our [Trees for Tribs Grant Webinar](#).

For technical directions about how to register with the Grants Gateway and start an application, please refer to the [Grants Gateway User Guide](#), which contains a step-by-step guide for registration, assigning roles, and opening and application. Grants Reform also offers weekly webinars on topics such as applying for a grant, contract development and managing document vaults. For more information, check out their [Training Calendar](#).

15. It was stated that acceptable sites were expanded from streams and creeks to lake shores and wetland areas through this round of funding. Is there any additional information that needs to be included in the planting plan if the site is lake front versus stream bank?

Please name the inlet and outlet tributaries of the lake -- if there are many tributaries emptying into the lake, name the ones closest to the project site -- and indicate if the lake is a drinking water source. The requirements for lakes are the same requirements for streams. See Appendix 2 in the RFA under "Site Selection" for more detail.

16. On the grant application, if we are using volunteers to plant the trees, are the trees then considered to be equipment?

Trees and shrubs are considered under the category of "other" and their cost is reimbursable. Please see page 23 and 24 of the RFA.

17. Will the grant pay the salaries of workers on overtime? We want to work with the volunteers and have the local High School Environmental Clubs help out, but their availability is mainly on Saturdays. Can we put in for our Town workers for OT on Saturdays within the grant?

Overtime is allowed as an eligible expense under the Trees for Tribs RFA, particularly when overtime is necessary to ensure the success of the tree planting program. However, it's important to remember that the reasonableness of expenses for staff time and project maintenance are part of the Cost Effectiveness scoring criteria (Page 21 of the RFA). If staff time and project management budget items are over 20% of the project cost, it will affect your application's score.

18. When budgeting salaries, do I add the fringe to the cost?

Fringe costs and salary costs should be listed separately, as they are listed as two separate budget categories in the application.

19. Is there a list of plant species the Saratoga Nursery is offering for the 2019 season?

Please refer to last year's [Saratoga Tree Sale Brochure](#) and the [Saratoga Tree Nursery tree seedling sale webpage](#).

Their plant selection will be similar in 2019, with some additions/subtractions of species. Be sure to call the Saratoga Tree Nursery, (518) 581-1439, or any other vendor to get a quote to include with your application.

20. We are interested in doing planting projects along streams and rivers for habitat restoration. We operate a native plant farm and do landscaping work. We'd like to start doing restoration projects for the state and counties. It sounds like this grant is intended to support a project like this. Can you direct me to how this can be accomplished?

It sounds like you are looking for partners to sell your plants to. If so, you would need to find an eligible Trees for Tribs applicant (non profit, municipality, academic institution) who would be interested in hiring you to do the plantings and buy plants from you. Municipalities have similar procurement rules to NY State, so you would need to be a bidder on a project(s).

21. Our nature center preserve contains hemlock trees and they are the primary erosion control for our local creek. We would like to use this grant to plant shade tolerant trees in these hemlock stands. The reason for this is that the invasive woolly-adelgid is making its way across the region. Planting non-hemlock native trees in these stands will maintain the critical erosion control when the inevitable hemlock loss occurs and hopefully prevent a sediment blowout in our creek and a downstream lake. We are currently participating in a Cooperative Weed Management Area project as a work site, and not the official grantee. The funding was given to another local non-profit. We are also receiving funding (from another funder) for trail maintenance. Our proposed planting sites are being mapped for the presence of four invasive weeds and nothing else. Do these projects disqualify us from the Trees for Tribes Program?

Your site would qualify for our grant program. The intent of the RFA is to avoid overlap with other riparian buffer programs (such as programs called CRP- Conservation Reserve Program or WQIP - Water Quality Improvement Program), but not to disqualify sites like yours, who are receiving funding for things like trail maintenance and mapping, which are related to riparian buffer work but are not an actual buffer program.

22. We received a grant in 2011, finished in 2016 from NYS Environmental Facilities Corp for a riparian buffer zone. Does this make us ineligible? *Addendum to question: this was for a portion of our property. Maybe we should focus on another area of our property?

Anything outside the area covered by the EFC grant would be eligible. Also, it would be great if your organization could partner with any other organizations to submit a few projects in your geographical area. The idea being - that you or another organization would be the lead applicant and that applicant could submit your project and maybe one or two others in your watershed or geographic area. You can certainly apply on your own, but partnerships do get more points in the scoring.

23. We have a question about the Cost Effectiveness Criteria below.

Cost Effectiveness 2 - Staff Time and Project Maintenance

Cost Effectiveness 3 – Eligible Costs and Prioritization of Tree Planting Activities

We would like to propose a project where the budget request is more than 30% allocated for staff time for an additional technician. It is likely that our entire budget request would be for staff time. With the potential point deductions for these two categories above, is our proposal likely to be competitive?

You would lose points or receive zero points on Cost Effectiveness 2 category, but if your staff is spending most of their time on the actual planting of trees, then you would not lose points in Cost Effectiveness 3 category. As this is the first round of this grant, it's uncertain how competitive the applications will be, but we encourage you to apply.

24. In our urban park, we have one pond that is not currently surrounded by trees. We have an intense Phragmites issue surrounding it. Outside of the pond, there are no other bodies of water in the park.

To be eligible for our grant your pond would need to have an inlet and outlet. Upon review of your proposed site, we determined that your inlet and outlet are underground culverts. Therefore, your project would not be eligible for our grant.

Your project may be eligible for the [Urban and Community Forestry Grants Program](#) (Tree Planting and Tree Maintenance), please visit this website for more information.

25. Can a SUNY (State University of New York) College/University apply to the grant?

SUNYs cannot apply because they are considered a state agency, but if your SUNY has a research foundation or another not for profit organization associated with your college/university, then that research foundation or not for profit can apply.

26. Can the project be on state owned land?

Yes, but the applicant cannot be a state agency.

27. Do specific sites need to be identified ahead of time, i.e. “shovel-ready” projects?

Yes, site(s) need to be identified ahead of time. A plant list, planting plan and maintenance plan for each site must be included in the application.

28. Will preference be given to stream corridors over riparian zones along a lake sure?

The intent of Trees for Tribs program is for stream/river riparian corridors, however in this grant round there is no preference (no higher scoring) given to stream corridors over lake or pond riparian zones.

29. Are Landscape Architects considered professional guidance?

Yes, in this round Landscape Architects will be considered professional guidance.

30. Along with our trees and shrubs we are required to plant understory vegetation in riparian areas. Are herbaceous plants and grasses considered eligible items?

Trees for Tribs historically have been focused on tree and shrub planting. If your proposed work plan includes the use of herbaceous plants for establishing your forested riparian buffer, please include a justification as to why they're being included. Please list species and provide detail in your planting plan.

31. We would also like to include a bioswale for nearby storm water runoff for our riparian planting project, are bioswales an eligible expense?

No, bioswales are not eligible for reimbursement under this grant.

32. Per the grant application the eligible costs include “site preparation”. For the project we would like to remove invasive species such as Japanese Knotweed and buckthorn. Could the “site preparation” include the removal of invasives?

Yes, removal of invasives in the riparian zone is allowed and would be considered an eligible expense under “site preparation”.

33. We have areas of construction debris, including cement, rubble and other construction materials in our stream corridor. We would like to remove this before we plant trees and shrubs. Would this type of “site preparation” be a reimbursable cost for your grant?

This would be considered within reason. Please include a justification for how removing debris would assist in the establishment of a forested riparian buffer. Cost effectiveness will also be considered when evaluating your proposal -- the cost to remove debris should not greatly outweigh the cost to plant trees and shrubs. Remember that building partnerships gives you extra points in your application and you might find a partner to help you remove debris at low cost. For example, you might seek to partner with a county/town Highway Department or a DPW, who might have equipment and expertise in removing debris from streambanks.

34. We are proposing the re-grading of our project areas to prepare for tree and shrub establishment. Would “site preparation” include re-grading?

No, this would not be an eligible cost for reimbursement under this grant. However, your project may be eligible for NYSDEC's WQIP grants, which fund streambank stabilization/ restoration/ bioengineering type projects. Watch the [WQIP website](#) for upcoming grant opportunities.

35. Does the grant allow/fund erosion control measures to be implemented with the project, i.e. coir logs and erosion control blankets?

No, but refer to NYSDEC's [WQIP grants](#) for funding streambank stabilization/erosion control projects.

36. Grant applicants are required to seek advice from a qualified professional (DEC Forester, certified arborists, or natural resource professional) prior to submitting applications. Does this need to be a professional on the DEC list of professional foresters? Our organization has several natural resource professionals on staff that are qualified to design site plans and recommended plant lists.

No, the natural resources professional or certified arborist does not need to be on the DEC list of professional foresters. Since you have an in-house professional within your organization, then you can utilize their expertise. See page 10 of the RFA under “Professional Guidance” for more detail.

37. Are we eligible to receive free trees and shrubs through the T4T's nursery for these restoration sites or would we secure (and budget for) plants from other nurseries?

No, applicants would need pay for trees and shrubs, from the Saratoga Nursery or another tree nursery, planted as part of this grant. However, the purchase of the trees and shrubs is a reimbursable cost.

38. Can we include money for invasive species removal and contract with a licensed herbicide applicator?

Yes, invasive species removal and herbicide application by a licensed herbicide professional (specific to preparing the site) would be considered a part of “site preparation”. If using an herbicide, please detail in your planting and maintenance plans how you plan to remove the invasives and follow up actions, since most invasive species cannot be removed in a single

action even with herbicides. Please detail application methods to ensure careful, proper and spot application of herbicide so as not to mobilize the herbicide into the stream.

39. During the webinar you had mentioned that we can use trees from other nurseries, does this mean that we can use these funds to plant larger trees besides seedlings?

We do not exclude the use of larger trees. However, we encourage you to include justification for the added expense of larger trees in your grant narrative, including in the budget narrative. Additionally, you could consider using a mix of seedlings and larger trees.

40. Would I be able to write a grant to plant larger ball/burlap trees to be planted in these parks and pay the municipalities for their time in planting and watering the trees?

Please refer to question #39 regarding planting larger trees. Yes, you can pay a municipality (or a consultant or not for profit organization) for their time planting, watering, and any other maintenance. Please keep in mind that projects with salary costs higher than 20% of the total budget will lose points in the cost effectiveness evaluation.

41. Can we plant along the edges of a salt water pond?

At this time, the Trees for Tribs grant is not supporting planting projects directly along a salt water pond, the ocean, or the sound.

However, our grant will support plantings along tributaries that start out as freshwater (the headwaters) to the mouth of that tributary. This would include some brackish areas where fresh water is mixing with salt water. If you are planting in brackish areas, you should include species that are able to survive in those locations.

42. I have over two acres of woods and would like to plant evergreen trees. Could I be part of this grant to plant more trees for a better air quality?

Please refer to question #5 above. Individual citizens are not eligible to apply for this grant. In addition, as this is a grant for planting trees along the riparian corridor (along the banks of streams/creeks/rivers), this project would not be eligible.

43. Can a DEC Forester help me make a map of my planting area?

DEC Foresters are not able to create maps for applicants. However, applicants are encouraged to reach out to a partner, such as a local Soil and Water Conservation District, a town or county planning department, or a local university if they need assistance creating a map.