Grants Gateway

Calendar Year 2027/Fiscal Year 2028 Project Solicitation

Credit: Dylan Taillie, Maryland Department of Natural Resources.

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The Department of Natural Resources' Watershed and Climate Services Grants Gateway

Overview

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR or Department), Watershed & Climate Services (WCS) is committed to providing technical and financial assistance to Maryland's communities that are challenged by intense storms, changing sea levels and increasing flooding, while balancing growing populations, economic growth, and increased tourism and recreation. These trends make the already challenging task of restoring the Chesapeake Bay, safeguarding people and infrastructure and managing natural resources even more complex.

Maryland's Watershed and Climate Services Grants Gateway (Grants Gateway) provides a resource for partners seeking technical and financial support for projects that foster healthy and resilient ecosystems, communities and economies. The Grants Gateway provides a centralized hub to streamline the grant application process for governments, academic institutions and non-governmental organizations. Eligible projects across six programs will improve water quality, restore local waterways, increase community flood planning, develop the next generation of environmental stewards, improve shorelines, and plan for beneficial reuse.

Important Notice for Applicants: The **Waterway Improvement Fund (WIF)** is no longer accepting applications through the Grants Gateway solicitation. For more information on WIF, please visit the ***"Grants managed by the Engineering & Construction Services Boating Access & Capital Waterway Improvement Program"*** website: https://dnr.maryland.gov/boating/pages/grants.aspx.

Selecting Your Funding Program:

It is important to choose the funding program that most closely relates to the goals of your project. Please reach out to the funding leads if your proposal crosswalks more than one opportunity. In certain situations, a proposal may be awarded funding through a different funding program from what the applicant originally selected. If this is the case, you will be notified of the funding program and any changes that are needed.

The funding programs are as follows, with more details on each program available in the Individual Funding Program section:

Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays Trust Fund (Outcome 1): Accelerate recovery and restoration of natural resources by implementing non-point source pollution reduction projects.

Contact: Katie Stahl, katie.stahl@maryland.gov

Community Flood Planning (Outcome 2): Reduce current and future coastal and precipitation-based flood risks through proactive planning

Contact: Leah Sheppard, leah.sheppard@maryland.gov

Resilience through Restoration (Outcome 3): Design habitat restoration projects to address erosion and flooding in communities and on public lands.

Contact: Nicole Carlozo, nicole.carlozo@maryland.gov

Environmental Education and Stewardship (Outcome 4): Improve student and community ability to take action benefiting watersheds and ecosystems through professional and community development and training, curriculum expansion, outdoor learning and stewardship.

Contact: Jen Wolfe, jen.wolfe@maryland.gov

Beneficial Use [BU] (Outcome 5): Assessment, planning, and design for projects that treat dredged sediment as a resource.

Contact: Maggie Cavey, maggie.cavey1@maryland.gov

Shoreline Erosion Loan Program: Protect waterfront property and enhance wildlife habitat utilizing nature-based living shoreline techniques.

Contact: Wes Gould, wesley.gould@maryland.gov

Submitting your Application:

Submission Guidelines:

- Applications **CANNOT** be mailed, faxed or submitted in person.
- Application questions can be reviewed and printed for planning purposes on the Grants Gateway website: http://dnr.maryland.gov/WCS/Pages/funding/grantsgateway.aspx

Submission Instructions:

All funding programs, except the Shoreline Erosion Loan program:

1. Must be submitted through the web-based grants management portal: https://webportalapp.com/sp/grants_gateway.
2. If this is your first time submitting a proposal, you will first need to visit the website and create a profile by selecting "Sign Up".
3. Please store your username and password in a secure location for later reference. If your project is selected your username and password will be used to submit online reports.
4. After creating your profile, use the "Get Started" button on the Home page to begin your application. There are three phases to complete your Application:
    a. **Common Application**: general details about your proposal
    b. **Project Details**: site and task specific details
    c. **Budget**: funding requested and leveraged/match fund details.
        i. Note: you will be asked to download a budget template for the appropriate funding program you are applying for that you are required to complete and upload. The template includes space for notes to explain or justify line items in your budget. There is no match or leveraged funds required; however, demonstrating matched and leveraged funds may help in the competitiveness of your proposal.
5. Fill out the appropriate information and follow the instructions for each subsequent step in the process. There is no additional narrative requirement for the application outside of the form-based responses. Please direct any questions about your applications to the appropriate funding program contact. All submissions require a transmittal letter on official letterhead that is signed by an executive who is authorized to request funding on behalf of the applicant organization.
    a. Note: If you are selecting the funding program "**Beneficial Use [BU] (Outcome 5)**", please select the dropdown listed as "*#5-Foster sustainable development and use of Maryland waterways with projects that benefit the general boating public.*" This is legacy text from the Waterway Improvement Fund.

Shoreline Erosion Loan Program:

1. Must be submitted through Shoreline Erosion Control Loan Request Google Form

Applicant Guidelines:

- Each funding program identifies eligible applicants. Please read these criteria carefully.

- Applicants will not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, age, sex, marital status, national origin or ancestry in the use of any funding acquired pursuant to this application.
- Non-profit organizations must be registered, in compliance and in good standing with the Maryland Secretary of State.

Due Dates:

Application Timeline

Solicitation Issue Date	**July 15, 2026**
Grants Gateway Webinar	**August 20, 2026 (2pm) EST**
Pay for Performance Webinar	**September 2, 2026 (10am) EST**
Technical Assistance/Site Visits (*as requested*)	**through November 15, 2026**
Beneficial Use Applications due	**September 18, 2026 by 11:59 p.m. EST**
All Other Applications due	**December 11, 2026 by 11:59 p.m. EST**
Shoreline Erosion Loan Applications due	**through December 11, 2026* by 11:59 p.m. EST** **will be accepted on a rolling basis*

Review Timeline

Technical Review and Project Evaluation	**January 2027 – May 2027**
Applicant Notification of Award	**June 2027 – July 2027**
Project Funding Begins	**July 1, 2027 – October 1, 2027**

Grant Award Information

Funding will be made available on a competitive basis. Applicants whose proposals are selected for funding will work with DNR to execute a funding agreement and the award will be subject to the terms and conditions included within. Awards are made possible with funding through the Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays Trust Fund, the Resilience through Restoration Initiative, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Environmental Protection Agency. Unless otherwise authorized, all payments will be made on a reimbursable basis and may be subject to annual appropriation.

Public Information Act Notice

Certain personal information requested by the Department of Natural Resources is necessary in determining eligibility for grants. Failure to disclose this information may result in the denial of funding provided by DNR. Availability of this information for public inspection is governed by the provisions of the Maryland Public Information Act, Title 4 of the General Provisions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland. This information will be disclosed to appropriate staff of the Department, or to public officials, for purposes directly connected with administration of the program for which its use is intended. Such information may be shared with state, federal, and local governments if legally required.

1. The Grant Applicant should give specific attention to the clear identification of those portions of its Proposal/Application that it considers confidential and/or proprietary commercial information or trade secrets, and provide justification why such materials, upon request, should not be disclosed by the State under the Public Information Act, Md. Code Ann., General Provisions Article, Title 4 (See also RFP Section 5.3.2.B "Claim of Confidentiality"). This information should be identified by page and section number and placed after the Title Page and before the Table of Contents in the Technical Proposal and if applicable, separately in the Financial Proposal.
2. Applicants are advised that, upon request for this information from a third party, the Department is required to make an independent determination whether the information must be disclosed.
3. Other records may be withheld if the agency decides that disclosure of those records would be "contrary to the public interest." GP §§ 4-343 to 4-357.
4. The Department will also be required to comply with the Public Information Act and regulations promulgated by the Department with respect to Sensitive Data meaning personal identifying information, sociological information, public health information; other proprietary or confidential data as defined by the State, including but not limited to "personal information" under Md. Code Ann., Commercial Law § 14-3501(e) and Md. Code Ann., St. Govt. § 10-1301(c) and information not subject to disclosure under the Public Information Act, Title 4 of the General Provisions Article; and information about an individual that (1) can be used to distinguish or trace an individual's identity, such as name, social security number, date and place of birth, mother's maiden name, or biometric records; or (2) is linked or linkable to an individual, such as medical, educational, financial, and employment information.

Individual Funding Program Information

Each project proposal must be submitted under only one of the following six programs. To ensure the best possible proposals the Department recommends that applicants contact the respective contact to discuss their project ideas and arrange a field visit (if applicable) prior to developing and submitting an application.

Below you will find an overview of all programs open for application. The following information will be identified for each:

- Fund source
- Minimum grant request
- Proposal due date
- Funding availability
- Eligibility requirements
- Project location requirements
- Project types of interest
- Who to contact
- Application review process, and
- Required attachments

Selection Process

Each project proposal will receive an initial screening by WCS to ensure the application meets basic eligibility criteria. WCS staff may follow up with applicants to discuss the projects further. The State reserves the right to refuse review due to ineligibility or lack of information. Eligible proposals will then be evaluated by an inter-agency review team based on criteria identified in the funding programs above. After review, if awarded, WCS staff will work with selected candidates to complete the final scope of work for the project and discuss timing needs to ensure project outcomes are met on time.

Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays Trust Fund (Trust Fund): Accelerate recovery and restoration of natural resources by implementing non-point source pollution reduction projects (Outcome 1)

Fund Source: *The Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays Trust Fund (state)*
Minimum grant request: *$500,000*

When is this proposal due? December 11, 2026 by 11:59 p.m.EST

When is funding available? Beginning July 1, 2027

How much funding is available? In the past five years, available funding for the solicitation has ranged from $15M to $35M. The minimum grant request is $500,000. If your proposal is below this threshold, you must email the contact below. There are two tracks including the traditional competitive grant program and the Pay for Performance track.

Who is eligible to apply? Local jurisdictions, non-governmental organizations, and institutions of higher education. For-profit/aggregators are eligible for the Pay for Performance track only.

Where can my project(s) be located? Funding is only available for projects located in the Maryland portions of both the Chesapeake Bay Watershed and the Atlantic Coastal Bays. Tree planting projects are eligible for all of Maryland. Public and private lands are eligible.

What kind of projects are supported by the Trust Fund?
Implementation-ready restoration proposals can be submitted under this funding source. Example projects can include, but are not limited to: wetland restoration, afforestation and other tree planting projects, riparian buffer restoration, stormwater best management practices, stream restoration, meadow plantings, and agricultural best management practices. Projects must address water quality in the Chesapeake Bay or Atlantic Coastal Bays by reducing non-point source pollution, namely nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment. Projects should be cost-effective, located in targeted areas, and be implementation-ready. Competitive projects will be large-scale, multi-partnered efforts with demonstrable water quality benefits. Proposed projects should demonstrate the ability to construct within 12 months of award. Additionally, the state is interested in supporting projects that provide desirable co-benefits (Maryland Code, Natural Resources § 8-2A-04), including:

- The restoration of aquatic resources, such as seagrass beds or oyster reefs;
- Climate resilience;

- Carbon sequestration;
- Creation of wildlife habitat;
- Local employment opportunities;
- The improvement or provision of recreational opportunities; or
- Environmental justice benefits;

To aid in the evaluation of these co-benefits, the state has developed a targeting map for applicants to better understand proposed projects' full impact. Guidance for the map is available here.

For all proposals: Funds cannot be used to bank water quality credits, meet compensatory mitigation requirements (i.e. new or re-development) or otherwise sold for profit.

Additional Requirements for Stream Restoration Proposals: A site visit is required for all stream restoration proposals**,** please fill out our site visit and technical assistance request form. Additionally, in order to be eligible for funding, it is required that stream restoration projects in the areas indicated on this map provide pre-restoration Maryland Biological Stream Survey (MBSS) benthic macroinvertebrate data:

- designated cold water streams (MDE Use Classes III and IV);
- existing cold water (identified by the presence of trout or benthic macroinvertebrate cold water obligates *Tallaperla* and *Sweltsa*); or,
- high quality (MDE Tier II) stream catchments.

Sampling data (collected by a certified practitioner) must include:

- Index of Biotic Integrity scores
- Taxa lists
- MBSS data sheets

Full requirements available here.

Who should I contact with application/project questions, site visit requests, or ideas?
Site visits are required for all stream restoration projects. Pre-Proposal meetings are required for all Pay for Performance Proposals.
We strongly encourage all applicants to contact us to discuss their projects in a Pre-Proposal meeting and arrange a site visit prior to application submission. The deadline for site visits, meetings, and technical assistance is **November 15, 2026.** Please fill out our site visit and technical request form to schedule a site visit or meeting, contact Katie Stahl, katie.stahl@maryland.gov with general questions.

How is my proposal reviewed and selected for an award?

- **Cost-Efficiency:** Defined as the state cost per pound of nutrients and sediment reduced. Leveraged funds help to reduce the overall cost of the project to the state, thus increasing cost-efficiency. Your FieldDoc nutrient and sediment reductions are audited internally and compared to other proposals. Costs by type of practice are also considered and compared.

- **Average Cost/lb:** The numbers below represent the FY2027 solicitation average state cost of funded projects per lb by practice type and total. These numbers may vary depending on geography (rural vs. urban) as well as other site factors.
    - Living Shoreline: $ 845/lb N
    - Meadow: $ 141/lb N
    - Stormwater Management: $1,394/lb N
    - Stream Restoration: $1,247/lb N
    - Tree Planting: $ 214/lb N
    - Wetland Restoration: $1,485/lb N
    - **Total Average (all practices): $ 664/lb N**
    - **Total Average (all practices): $4,806/lb P**
    - **Total Average (all practices): $3,611/ton TSS**

- **Readiness and Ability to Proceed:** Your proposal is scored on having a properly vetted project. If permits are needed, have you applied for and/or received permits? Will construction begin within 12 months? Have you demonstrated organizational capacity? If the applicant is a current or former grantee, has the timeliness, completeness, and accuracy of past reporting and invoicing performance demonstrated satisfactory organizational capacity and readiness? Are the appropriate stakeholders and community partners engaged? How far along are designs? Is there a right of entry and/or long-term protection plan in place (ex. landowner agreement)? Is there a maintenance agreement in place? Are the nutrient and sediment credits being used by a county, municipality, etc?

- **Targeting and Maximizing Opportunities:** Click here to view the targeting map that can assist in showing how your project can maximize opportunities and meet co-benefits goals. Does the project include enhanced habitat benefits, ecological uplift, floodplain reconnection and/or increased resiliency? Is the project in a targeted area? Does the project include community engagement, if applicable? Are you performing any kind of monitoring including benthic macroinvertebrate sampling, temperature monitoring or any other water quality monitoring to demonstrate current impairment, or to demonstrate whether the project objectives will be achieved (required for some stream

restoration)? Have you taken the opportunity to highlight how the project fits into any layers on the targeting map? Does the project directly address the co-benefits discussed in the narrative?

- **Overall Proposal:** Your project will be scored based on a complete application that will deliver a desired and scientifically sound project. What is the current level of degradation? Is the problem clearly defined? Is the proposed project sufficient to fix the issue? Are the designs consistent with the deliverables in the narrative? Is there a detailed budget? Does the budget seem reasonable? Is there support from the stakeholders?

Required attachments:

- **For all Projects:** A Transmittal Letter on official letterhead that is signed by an executive who is authorized to request funding on behalf of the applicant organization.
- **For Projects on Private Lands:** Landowner agreement(s); and, if applicable, HOA/Community Land Authorization(s). Templates are available, including an updated landowner agreement, on the Grants Gateway site.
- **Incorporate Future Conditions Data:** Worksheet for Selecting a RSLR Estimate, which is Appendix A (also available on the Grants Gateway website) in the *Guidance for Using Maryland's 2023 Sea Level Rise Projections* report.
- **For Non-governmental Applicants:** Letter of support from a local government representative; landowner agreement as necessary
- **FieldDoc nutrient and sediment reductions**:
    - Applicants are required to use FieldDoc.org to estimate nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment reductions. **Any proposal that does not include calculations from FieldDoc will not be considered.** The Fielddoc website includes extensive help documentation to support your application including guidance specifically for Trust Fund applications. Please take advantage of this documentation as a first step when utilizing FieldDoc. DNR and FieldDoc staff are also available to answer follow up questions to support your application to Grants Gateway. Use PACT code 3WP9 when submitting your application in FieldDoc.
- **Current Designs**
- **Permits (if applicable)**
- **Complete Budget using FY28 Budget Template**
- **Letters of Support from Committed Partners**
- **Photographs of Current Conditions**
- **If Stream Restoration: Pre-restoration MBSS sampling data (if stream restoration is located in aforementioned areas) and documentation of site visit**

- **Communication and Engagement Strategy**

FY28 Pay for Performance Solicitation

In addition to the traditional competitive grant program above, the Trust Fund is soliciting pay for performance contracts that provide the following:

- Cost per lb or outcome and cost per unit of implementation that is more cost effective than traditional grant values, as seen in the Trust Fund Table above. Maryland DNR may select to not fund proposals as Pay for Performance if found to be less cost effective than traditional grant mechanisms.
- Reduced risk to state as payments commence once the project is installed and verified, with subsequent payments offered once project is verified to be functioning and sustained
- Innovative projects and/or projects of scale
    - Large scale restoration where implementation units exceed traditional grant acreages
    - Additionally, the state is interested in supporting holistic projects that maximize co-benefits
    - Innovative BMPs with a quantifiable reduction in nutrient and/or sediment pollution or increase in co-benefits
- Measurement of goal attainment (%) - Measure of success is more specific than implementation units and must include measurement of hydric soils, plant survivability, canopy cover, plant density or other indicators that measure performance.
- Long-term sustainability of performance measures achieved through expected project lifespan, monitoring, easements/landowner agreements, operation and maintenance and/or adaptive management plans
- Pre-Proposal Meetings are required for all Pay for Performance Proposals; site visits are required for stream restoration projects and strongly encouraged for other restoration practices. The deadline for site visits, meetings, and technical assistance is **November 15, 2026.** Please fill out our site visit and technical request form to schedule a site visit or meeting, contact Katie Stahl, katie.stahl@maryland.gov with general questions.

FY28 Pay for Performance Proposal Evaluation and Required Documents

Proposals will be evaluated based on the percent of goal attained, cost effectiveness, and maximization of co-benefits. Payments will be tied to outcome attainment. In addition to the required documents above, Pay for Performance applicants will need to provide a proposed statement of environmental outcomes and a quantification plan, as an upload. Examples of goals include, but are not limited to:

- Example: County WIP goal of x # acres of wetlands on agricultural land and proposal meets 30% of that goal with measurement of outcome attainment verified by presence of hydric soils
- Example: Percent contribution towards a tree planting goal with outcome attainment verified by survivability or diameter breast height
- Example: Percent towards Chesapeake Bay Agreement goal for submerged aquatic vegetation acres with outcome attainment verified by percent coverage through annual surveys
- Example: implement recommendations identified in local plans or assessments (i.e. hazard mitigation plan, nuisance flood plan,green infrastructure plan).
- For innovative practices without a specific goal, examples could include percent reduction from the source sector the practice applies to

Proposal Requirements:

Pay for success applicants will need to provide a proposed statement of environmental outcomes and a quantification plan, as an upload, which includes:

- STATEMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL OUTCOMES: Provide a statement of outcomes that the applicant will deliver to the State of Maryland for payment. Include appropriate units of measure, type of best management practice, project life cycle, footprint, and any other pertinent detail. *Ex. Applicant A will deliver a reduction of 22,000 lb of nitrogen per year for 20 years by creating and restoring 52 acres of wetlands to support Chesapeake Bay Agreement wetland goals.*
    - Examples of eligible BMP types include, but are not limited to:
        - tidal wetlands
        - nontidal wetlands
        - riparian forest buffers
        - upland tree planting
        - living shoreline
        - stream restoration
        - green infrastructure and other stormwater efforts
    - Examples of environmental outcomes to deliver include, but are not limited to:
        - tree planting acreage towards the Chesapeake Bay Agreement Healthy Forests and Trees Outcome
        - wetland acreage goal at Chesapeake Bay Agreement scale
- QUANTIFICATION PLAN

- Description of the method that will be used to measure or model environmental outcomes and co-benefits (This would be in addition to the required use of FieldDoc.)
- Description of the compliance monitoring that will occur to ensure that the proposed project objectives are implemented, functional, and maintained over the life of the project
    - Describe the modeling and monitoring that will be used to verify the deliverables and sustainability of the design approach. If using an as-built survey, for example, provide the details that will be included (a longitudinal profile, structure survey, cross sections, in-stream habitat assessment, photo documentation, vegetation monitoring).
    - Where applicable, provide a native planting plan and vegetation monitoring plan. At minimum, estimate the number of stations, timeline for monitoring, station location and information to be collected. Examples include:
        1. Dominant woody species identification listing wetland indicator status
        2. Percent survival of planted species noting approximate height or DBH
        3. A non-native/invasive species assessment including percent cover
    - Describe adaptive management strategies that will be used to correct issues.
    - Final assessments must include the modeling and/or monitoring details. For example, a wetland delineation would be expected for a proposal that includes wetland restoration.
- Recommended verification steps that will be carried out by the state or an evaluator to confirm model results or accurate measurement of environmental outcomes
- The timeline for proposed payments under a contract with the state
    - Outcome payments due under the contract will be paid only after specific performance measures have been verified and approved.
    - From first to final payment, the maximum payment period is 8 years, with priority for shorter payment time periods.
    - A majority of the payment schedule should occur after outcomes have been documented.
    - The payment schedule should include specific milestones in outcome achievement.

- The below table represents an example payment blank template, including headers for Performance Measure/Milestone, Payment #, % of Contract Award, $ Amount, as well as a cumulative/total line at the bottom.

Performance Measure/Milestone	Payment #	% of Contract Award	$ Amount
	1		
	2		
	3		
	4		
	5		
	6		
	7		
Cumulative		100%	

Adaptive Management Funding

Projects that have previously been funded by Maryland's Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays Trust Fund for implementation may be eligible for adaptive management funding. Adaptive management funds are requested outside of the annual Grants Gateway solicitation. For more information, and link to apply, please reach out to katie.stahl@maryland.gov and include the previously funded Trust Fund project name and grant number.

Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays Trust Fund Contact:

Katie Stahl
Maryland Department of Natural Resources
Watershed & Climate Services
(p) 410.260.8745 | (e) katie.stahl@maryland.gov

Community Flood Planning: Reduce current and future coastal and precipitation-based flood risks through proactive planning (Outcome 2)

Fund Source: *Maryland Coastal Zone Management Award, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (federal)*
Maximum request: *$125,000*

> ***Important Notice for Community Flood Planning Applicants***
> *The Community Flood Planning* grant is currently open for applications only located within Maryland's Coastal Zone. Note that this funding opportunity is supported through federal funding and the availability of funds may change.

When is this proposal due? December 11, 2026 by 11:59 p.m. EST

When is funding available? October 1, 2027

How much funding is available? Proposal requests typically range from $40,000 - $100,000 for projects that will be a maximum of one year in duration. If awarded, applicants should be open to either receiving direct financial support or technical assistance through a Watershed & Climate Services selected provider.

Who is eligible to apply? County governments and local jurisdictions

Where can my project(s) be located? At this time, eligible projects may only be located within Maryland's Coastal Zone (see map for details). Since these are planning projects, the project area can encompass both public and private lands.

What kind of projects are supported by the Community Flood Planning grant?
The Community Flood Planning grant seeks to help local governments understand and enhance their capacity to plan for coastal, riverine, and precipitation based flood events. Flood impacts may be at the community, county, or municipal level and may be the result of current or projected high tide flooding, changing sea levels, riverine flooding, and/or an increased incidence and severity of precipitation events.

Proposed projects can support risk and vulnerability assessments to understand current and future exposure, identify and incorporate adaptation strategies into current planning processes, and develop conceptual designs or engineered solutions.

Applicants that are addressing flooding caused by tidal waters or sea level rise are strongly encouraged to use Appendix A of the Guidance for Using Maryland's 2023 Sea Level Rise Projections report to determine flood risk tolerance and sea level rise estimate for long term projects. Projects addressing precipitation-induced flooding should be consistent with the trends described in the Northeast chapter of the Fourth National Climate Assessment and illustrated for the project's target area through the Projected Intensity-Duration-Frequency (IDF) Curve Data Tool for the Chesapeake Bay Watershed and Virginia. Proposed projects can plan for either or both short (1-10 years) and long (10+ years) term flood impacts.

Project outcomes and deliverables must result in risk-reduction strategies and/or higher regulatory standards that propel the implementation of identified on-the-ground adaptation projects (see program change under project review criteria).

Proposed projects should reference the jurisdiction's nuisance flood plan, flood mitigation plan, and/or other related planning processes to show how it aligns with current context, initiatives, and goals.

Applicants are encouraged to use the MyCoast: Maryland tool/app to document current impacts and changes over time.

Previously funded projects can be found here.

Examples of projects may include:

- Assess flood hazards and existing stormwater infrastructure to identify system improvements, including green infrastructure approaches, to reduce flood risk.
- Develop conceptual or engineered plans for areas identified in previous planning processes that are prioritized for flood risk reduction.
- Evaluate how flood risks may be impacted by projected changes in precipitation patterns.
- Assess the vulnerability of natural resources, recreational and public access, and build infrastructure to nuisance or high-tide flooding and future impacts under the *2023 Maryland Sea Level Rise Projections*.

- Update and adopt planning processes to incorporate future conditions through approaches such as small area flood mitigation plans, critical areas plans, floodplain ordinances, building codes, zoning ordinances, and/or long-term plans.
- Develop or integrate a green infrastructure plan to address coastal, stormwater, or floodplain hazards.
- Maintain membership in, or apply to, Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Community Rating System (CRS).

Who should I contact with application/project questions or ideas?
To discuss project ideas, please contact Leah Sheppard (leah.sheppard@maryland.gov)

How is my proposal reviewed and selected for an award?

- **Proposal Completeness**: All sections of the proposal were satisfactorily completed.
- **Problem and Need:** The proposal describes a significant local need to address a problem resulting from present and/or future flood impacts.
- **Appropriateness of Proposed Work**: The proposed project presents a technically- and financially-feasible approach to address the defined problem and identify short-term and long-term solutions.
- **Use of Resources and Tools to Assess Future Conditions**: Proposals addressing sea level rise provide a completed Appendix A from the Guidance for Using Maryland's 2023 Sea Level Rise Projections. Proposals describe which tools and resources were used to develop the proposed approach.
- **Advances Flood Risk Reduction or Adaptation Strategies**: The proposed work fits into the larger context of community efforts to reduce flood risk and impacts
- **Community and Stakeholder Engagement**: The proposal describes how the project will engage the local community and/or appropriate stakeholders, including the government body that has to adopt or approve the final deliverables. The proposal describes how the applicant intends to address the needs of those most vulnerable to coastal flooding and with fewer resources to address adverse impacts.
- **Partners**: Partners are identified and have demonstrated a commitment to participate.
- **Program Change and Readiness to Proceed**: Proposals commit to achieving a program change, which could be a change in local programs, policies, or decisions that reduce vulnerability to flood impacts. The proposal demonstrates clear intent to advance any recommended/identified solutions.

What are the required attachments?

- **A Transmittal Letter** on official letterhead that is signed by an executive who is authorized to request funding on behalf of the applicant organization.

- **Letters of Support** from County or Town Council, Town Administrator, County Executive, and/or the decision-making body that will adopt the project outcome. Letters of Support from partners are also appreciated.
- **Completed Budget Table**. Available on the Grants Gateway website
- **Completed Appendix A** using the *Guidance for Using Maryland's 2023 Sea Level Rise Projections* (for coastal projects).
- **Communication and Engagement Strategy**. The template is also available on Grants Gateway site.

Outcome Contact: Leah Sheppard
Maryland Department of Natural Resources
Watershed and Climate Services
(p) 410.260.8718 |(e) leah.sheppard@maryland.gov

Resilience through Restoration: Design habitat restoration projects to address erosion and flooding in communities and on public lands (Outcome 3)

Fund Source: *Resilience through Restoration Fund (state) and Maryland Coastal Zone Management Award, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (federal).*
Maximum request for design: *$100,000*

> ***Important Notice for Applicants:***
> For the CY2027/FY2028 grant cycle, this funding opportunity is only open to design and permitting proposals. Construction projects are not eligible for funding at this time due to current funding limitations. If additional construction funding becomes available, a separate solicitation may be announced at a later date. Applicants with construction-ready projects are encouraged to contact the designated Contact to discuss future opportunities and project readiness.

When is this proposal due? December 11, 2026 by 11:59 p.m. EST

When is funding available? July 1, 2027 - October 1, 2027 depending on fund source and state/federal approvals.

How much funding is available?

Design/permit projects typically cost between $30,000 and $100,000. If your project is above this threshold, please contact the designated Contact to discuss project scope. Permit fees are not eligible. Construction projects are not eligible for CY2027/FY2028 due to funding limitations. Applicants with construction-ready projects are encouraged to contact the designated Contact to discuss future opportunities and project readiness.

Who is eligible to apply? Local governments and non-profit organizations can submit proposals under this outcome. Please reach out to the outcome contact for more information on non-profit eligibility.

Where can my project be located? Projects can be located throughout Maryland. Public and private lands are eligible, but projects on private lands must demonstrate a community-wide benefit and provide an access/landowner agreement.

What kind of projects are supported by this funding opportunity? This funding opportunity supports design/permitting of restoration projects. Design/permit projects are typically completed within 24 months. Projects may include natural and nature-based shoreline

restoration, floodplain restoration, beneficial use of dredged material, tidal and nontidal wetland restoration, dune and beach restoration, and green infrastructure such as rain gardens, bioswales, and other green stormwater and restoration practices that provide community and ecosystem benefits by restoring, enhancing, or creating habitat.

Examples of projects may include:

- Design a suite of restoration projects that address coastal and non-coastal flooding and provide community-wide benefits, such as reduced flooding on public bus routes, parks, and schools.
- Design a stormwater practice (i.e. bioretention facility, rain garden, stream restoration, regenerative stormwater conveyance system) that will address rain-induced flooding.
- Design a coastal habitat restoration project that enhances natural features (i.e. wetlands, dunes, forests, floodplains, oyster reefs) while protecting roads, critical infrastructure, or habitat from changing environmental conditions.
- Design a living shoreline or wetland enhancement project that uses local dredged material while protecting public lands that buffer coastal economies.

Who should I contact with application/project questions or ideas? To discuss project ideas or arrange a site visit, please contact Nicole Carlozo at nicole.carlozo@maryland.gov. Applicants considering project proposals that include beneficial use of dredged material are encouraged to contact Maggie Cavey at maggie.cavey1@maryland.gov to discuss opportunities that may enhance the competitiveness of their proposal.

How is my proposal reviewed and selected for an award?

Eligible projects will:

1. Enhance habitat through coastal restoration or nature-based practices. Projects may support design and engineering of restoration practices.
2. Address changing environmental conditions. Projects will reduce community flood risk and/or erosion impacts.
3. Provide community-wide benefits. Projects will benefit a majority of community members and protect community infrastructure and/or assets.
4. Incorporate future conditions data. Projects will address short term (1-10 years) and long term (10+ years) impacts based on the life expectancy of the proposed project. For coastal flooding/erosion projects, consider marsh migration and the 2023 Sea Level Rise Projections for Maryland using the Guidance for Using Maryland's 2023 Sea Level Rise Projections. For stormwater projects, consider trends in the Northeast chapter of the Fourth National Climate Assessment, the Projected Intensity-Duration-Frequency (IDF)

Curve Data Tool for the Chesapeake Bay Watershed and Virginia, and/or local flood forecasting.

Competitive projects will:

- Demonstrate readiness and ability to proceed (i.e. work can begin within 6 months).
- Provide community-wide benefits through resilience, water quality, habitat, public access, health, job creation, recreation, or cultural importance to the community .
- Document critical or community infrastructure (i.e. # roads, buildings, parks) benefiting from the project.
- Partner with a local government and/or implement recommendations identified in local plans or assessments (i.e. hazard mitigation plan, nuisance flood plan, green infrastructure plan).
- Restore public lands, allow public access, and serve as a demonstration site.
- Demonstrate community support and engagement opportunities.
- Support technical innovations, such as beneficial use of dredged material for habitat restoration, shoreline stabilization, beach nourishment, or elevation enhancement of wetlands.
- Provide conceptual-level or greater designs.
- Provide up to 1:1 matching funds or include cost savings measures. Leveraging funds through the Shoreline Erosion Loan Program is highly encouraged, where applicable.
- Shoreline projects will be screened through Maryland's Coastal Resiliency Assessment and the Maryland Coastal Flood Explorer.

What are the required attachments?

- **A Transmittal Letter** on official letterhead that is signed by an executive who is authorized to request funding on behalf of the applicant organization.
- **For Projects on Private Lands**: Landowner agreement(s) and, if applicable, HOA/Community Land Authorization(s). Templates available on Grants Gateway site.
- **For Projects in Areas to Be Impacted by Sea Level Rise:** Appendix A in the *Guidance for Using Maryland's 2023 Sea Level Rise Projections* report to select a RSLR estimate.
- **For projects that will address flood hazards:** WCS encourages applicants to use the MyCoast: Maryland tool to document current impacts and changes over time.
- **For Non-profit Applicants**: Letter of support from a local government representative (i.e. county or town council, town administrator, county planning office, county executive) that addresses how the project supports local efforts to address changing environmental conditions; and, landowner agreement(s) as necessary.
- **Current designs** (if applicable)
- **Communication and Engagement Strategy**. Template available on Grants Gateway site.

- **Photographs of current site conditions and impacts from high tide or rain-induced flooding.**
- **Complete Budget Table**. Template available on Grants Gateway website

Adaptive Management

Projects that have previously been funded by Maryland's Resilience through Restoration Fund may be eligible for adaptive management funding. Adaptive Management is an approach to ecological restoration and land management that focuses on learning by doing: where monitoring data are used to inform corrective actions on the current project and increase the likelihood of success of the restoration efforts.

The goal of the Adaptive Management Fund is to address changes in site conditions, lessons learned, or other unforeseen/untimely circumstances for former Resilience through Restoration projects to improve restoration outcomes, rather than addressing impacts that should have been incorporated into the original design or that stem from a lack of routine maintenance. Projects will be prioritized that have social benefits, ecological and water quantity benefits, incorporate long term solutions, and are cost effective. Projects must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Proposals must be a project previously funded by Maryland's Resilience through Restoration Fund.
- The project must have a clear rationale for why intervention is needed and why it is outside of the original scope of the project.
- The project will not be considered if still within the grant period and/or within a year of being completed/constructed.
- Project types/BMPs no longer supported by DNR will not be considered.
- Proposals must include past monitoring plans to evaluate if proposed adaptive management objectives will be achieved.
- Long-term maintenance plans must be included.

Adaptive management funds are requested outside of the annual Grants Gateway solicitation. For more information, and link to apply, please reach out to nicole.carlozo@maryland.gov and include the previously funded Resilience through Restoration project name and grant number.

Outcome Contact: Nicole Carlozo
Maryland Department of Natural Resources
Watershed & Climate Services
(p) 410.260.8726 | (e) nicole.carlozo@maryland.gov

Environmental Education and Stewardship: Improve student and community ability to take action benefiting Chesapeake ecosystems through professional development and training, curriculum expansion, outdoor learning and stewardship. (Outcome 4)

Fund Source: *Environmental Protection Agency's Chesapeake Bay Implementation Grant (federal)*
Maximum Request: *$75,000*

When is this proposal due? December 11, 2026

When is funding available? Beginning July 1, 2027

How much funding is available? Up to $75,000. If your proposal is above this threshold, please email the program contact below.

Who is eligible to apply? Local non-governmental organizations or non-profits, local and state agencies, and schools and school systems including higher learning institutions. We encourage partners to detail how they are supporting local communities, enhancing outreach to groups who demonstrate need, and involving the communities they are working with in their programming.

Where can my project(s) be located? Public lands, in schoolyards, community property, private property. All projects should be located within Maryland's portion of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

What kind of projects are supported by Environmental Education and Stewardship? Funding will be offered as available to support learning experiences and educational opportunities focused on environmental issue exploration and investigation leading to stewardship action. Funding supports two tracks for this funding program:
Track One will focus on projects serving formal K-12 education systems, and
Track Two will focus on projects serving communities or public education. Both tracks include proposals focused on local watershed and land-use issues, and should be based on sound environmental education principles.

Applicants should collaborate with the student or community that they will be working with to build capacity, engagement and stewardship. The project should address the needs of the community and include the voices of the community.

Examples of projects may include:

- Transportation and facility fees to allow student, teacher, or community access to natural areas such as parks, public lands, and to environmental facilities
- Environmental engagement or stewardship for students or community members
- Environmental educator professional development and training
- Community environmental education programs and training
- Supply costs for environmental investigations, field equipment, and stewardship projects

Who should I contact with application/project questions, ideas, or eligibility? To discuss project ideas, please contact Jen Wolfe, jen.wolfe@maryland.gov

How is my proposal reviewed and selected for an award?
When applying, please include the track number in your title (Ex. Track 1 - Public School Tree Planting and Identification Program)

Demographics/Need: **For both Tracks 1 and 2**, your proposal will be scored on:

1. The number of people who will benefit from the project,
2. The outreach and participation of groups who demonstrate need
3. Demonstration of addressing local environmental issues and community engagement, and
4. Ability to provide demonstration value, transferability, or value to other programs or organizations.

Education and Stewardship Connections:
For Track 1 (School Systems), your proposal will be scored on:

1. Connections to curriculum standards*,
2. Opportunities to provide hands-on environmental and learner-led educational experiences,
3. Capability for systemic or sustainable programming, and
4. Inclusion of professional development opportunities.

For Track 2 (Community Education and Stewardship), your proposal will be scored on:

1. Connections to environmental or stewardship best practices,

2. Opportunities to provide hands-on environmental and learner-led educational experiences,
3. Capability for systemic or sustainable programming, and
4. Training and experiential learning opportunities.

**Connections between the proposed work and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), Maryland Environmental Literacy Standards, Maryland Service-Learning Graduation Requirements, and/or the Engaged Communities Goal of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement (Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences).*

Program Development: **For both Tracks 1 and 2**, your proposal will be scored on:

1. Emphasis on teacher/school system or community engagement in planning and implementation,
2. Reach of the project and potential to benefit the local community, and
3. Capacity to deliver the program as described

Budget: **For both Tracks 1 and 2**, your proposal will be scored on:

1. Feasibility for the requested funding to achieve the project's goals,
2. Cost-effectiveness of the project, and
3. Methodology to include the individuals, groups, or organizations needed to effectively fund and implement the project.

What are the required attachments?

Track 1 (School System or Systemic Program):

- **A Transmittal Letter** on official letterhead that is signed by an executive who is authorized to request funding on behalf of the applicant organization.
- **Letter(s) of support from leadership of the school system(s) or organization** (i.e. superintendent(s), supervisor of science, school principal, organization director)
- **Complete Budget Table**. Available on the Grants Gateway website
- **Letters of Support from participating partners/impacted community members**
- **Communication and Engagement Strategy**
- **Environmental Literacy Plan or other evidence of environmental literacy programming**, such as curriculum alignment, Meaningful Watershed Educational Experience (MWEE), Environmental Literacy Model (ELM), etc.

Track 2 (Partner/Community Organization):

- **Transmittal letter** from applicant organization, with signature of authority
- **Letter(s) of support from partners**

- **Complete Budget Table**. Available on the Grants Gateway website
- **Communication and Engagement Strategy**
- **Outline or documentation of environmental programming, training plan and/or activities for the project**

Environmental Education and Stewardship Contact:
Jen Wolfe
Maryland Department of Natural Resources
Watershed & Climate Services
(p) 410.260.8988|(e) jen.wolfe@maryland.gov

Beneficial Use (BU): Assessment, planning, design, and permitting for projects that treat dredged sediment as a resource (Outcome 5)

Fund Source: *Maryland Coastal Zone Management Award, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (federal).*

Important Reminders for BU Applicants:

1. The **Waterway Improvement Fund (WIF)** is no longer accepting applications through the Grants Gateway solicitation. For more information on WIF, please visit the "Grants managed by the Engineering & Construction Services Boating Access & Capital Waterway Improvement Program" website.
2. If you are selecting the funding program "**Beneficial Use [BU] (Outcome 5)**", please select the dropdown listed as "*#5-Foster sustainable development and use of Maryland waterways with projects that benefit the general boating public.*" This is legacy text from the Waterway Improvement Fund.

When is this proposal due? September 18, 2026 by 11:59 p.m. EST

When is funding available? Beginning October 1, 2026

How much funding is available? Beneficial use assessment/planning/design/permit projects typically cost between $30,000 and $100,000. Permit fees are not eligible. Construction projects are not eligible for CY20276/FY20287 due to funding limitations.

Who is eligible to apply? Local governments and non-profit organizations can submit proposals under this funding opportunity. Please reach out to the track contact for more information on non-profit eligibility.

Where can my project be located? Projects can be located throughout Maryland. Public and private lands are eligible, but projects on private lands must demonstrate a community-wide benefit. Projects must be located within Maryland's Coastal Zone.

What kinds of projects are supported by this funding? Assessment, planning, design, and permitting for projects using dredged material (e.g., thin-layer placement) to restore wetlands.

- Feasibility studies for stabilizing eroding shorelines or islands using local sediment.
- Restoration of underwater grasses or enhancement of fish/shellfish habitats.
- Development of local sediment management plans to match community dredging needs with restoration sites.

Who should I contact with application/project questions or ideas?
To discuss project ideas or arrange a site visit, please contact Maggie Cavey at maggie.cavey1@maryland.gov

How is my proposal reviewed and selected for an award?

- Program Change: Applicants must commit to achieving a change in local programs or policies that move BU forward.
- Collaboration: Demonstrating formal partnerships with dredging authorities (e.g., Marinas, Port/MPA) is required.
- Material Sourcing: Clear alignment with dredging schedules and basic assessments of grain size/contamination.

Competitive projects will:

- Demonstrate readiness and ability to proceed (i.e. work can begin within 6 months).
- Provide community-wide benefits through resilience, water quality, habitat, public access, health, job creation, recreation, or cultural importance to the community.
- Document critical or community infrastructure (i.e. # roads, buildings, parks) benefiting from the project.
- Partner with a local government and/or implement recommendations identified in local plans or assessments (i.e. hazard mitigation plan, nuisance flood plan, green infrastructure plan).
- Restore public lands, allow public access, and serve as a demonstration site.
- Demonstrate community support and engagement opportunities.
- Support technical innovations, such as beneficial use of dredged material for habitat restoration, shoreline stabilization, beach nourishment, or elevation enhancement of wetlands.
- Provide up to 1:1 matching funds or include cost savings measures. Leveraging funds through the Shoreline Erosion Loan Program is highly encouraged, where applicable.
- Shoreline projects will be screened through Maryland's Coastal Resiliency Assessment.

What are the required attachments?

- **A Transmittal Letter** on official letterhead that is signed by an executive who is authorized to request funding on behalf of the applicant organization.
- **For Projects on Private Lands**: Landowner agreement(s) and, if applicable, HOA/Community Land Authorization(s). Templates available on Grants Gateway site.
- **For Projects in Areas to Be Impacted by Sea Level Rise:** Appendix A in the *Guidance for Using Maryland's 2023 Sea Level Rise Projections* report to select a RSLR estimate.

- **For Non-profit Applicants**: Letter of support from a local government representative (i.e. county or town council, town administrator, county planning office, county executive) that addresses how the project supports local efforts to address climate changing environmental conditions; and, landowner agreement(s) as necessary.
- **Current designs** (if applicable)
- **Preliminary sediment characterization data** (e.g., grain size analysis), if available.
- **Communication and Engagement Strategy**. Template available on Grants Gateway site.
- **Photographs of current site conditions and impacts from high tide or rain-induced flooding.**
- **Complete Budget Table**. Template available on Grants Gateway website

Beneficial Use Contact:
Maggie Cavey
Maryland Department of Natural Resources
Watershed & Climate Services
(p) 240.886.2356 | (e) maggie.cavey1@maryland.gov

Shoreline Erosion Loan Program – Protect waterfront property and enhance wildlife habitat utilizing nature-based living shoreline techniques.

Fund Source: *The Shoreline Erosion Control Revolving Loan Fund*
Maryland's Shoreline Conservation Service was established in 1964 by act of the Maryland General Assembly for the purpose of addressing shoreline and erosion problems along the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. The program provides technical and financial assistance to waterfront property owners experiencing erosion.

> **Important Notice for Applicants**:
> The **Shoreline Erosion Loan Program accepts applications through its own Google Form**(https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfgaL0RNubIel1tiSuu-fpMxp5srCMyuByXAGz3qxOK6ZUeZw/viewform).

When is this proposal due? through December 11, 2026 on a rolling basis

When is funding available? July 1, 2027

How much funding is available? $1,000,000

Who is eligible? Local governments, non-profit organizations, communities, and private property owners are eligible to apply.

Where can my project(s) be located? Waterways within the State of Maryland that are experiencing active erosion.

What kind of projects are supported by the Shoreline Erosion Loan Program? This opportunity is for nature-based living shoreline projects only**.** Financial assistance is not available for structural projects (ie. bulkheads, revetments, seawalls etc). Awards will be based on the availability of funds.

Examples of projects may include:
The Shoreline Erosion Control Revolving Loan Fund provides waterfront property owners with an opportunity to apply for a zero-interest loan for nature-based living shoreline projects. Loan terms range from 5-20 years, determined by project type, and include a nominal administrative fee based on projected construction costs. The loan is secured by a Shoreline Erosion Control

Lien and/or a Special Shoreline Erosion Control Taxing District (dependent on applicant type). Funds may be used towards design and/or implementation of nature-based living shoreline projects.

Who should I contact with application/project questions or to schedule a site visit?
To discuss project ideas, please contact Wesley Gould at wesley.gould@maryland.gov. **A site visit with WCS is required prior to application submission.** Schedule a site visit here. For more information, please review our frequently asked questions page.

How is my proposal reviewed and selected for a loan? Proposals will be scored based on cost effectiveness, readiness and ability to proceed, and by maximizing ecological uplift opportunities appropriate to the site. Proposals will be reviewed on a revolving basis, based on the availability of funds.

What are the required attachments?

- Photographs of existing site conditions
- Current design plan (if applicable)
- Permits (if applicable)
- Cost estimate, budget, contracts etc. (if applicable)

Shoreline Erosion Loan Program Contact:
Wesley Gould
Maryland Department of Natural Resources
Watershed & Climate Services
(p) 410.260.8812 |(e) wesley.gould@maryland.gov

Cancellation of the Solicitation

The state reserves the right to cancel this solicitation at any time.