

**2023 WUV ENHANCEMENT
DEVELOPMENT, DESIGN, AND
IMPLEMENTATION BLOCK GRANT**

8/3/2023

WUV Director: Lyn Munno

WUV Grant Administrator: Christian Pelletier

ENHANCEMENT DEVELOPMENT, DESIGN, AND IMPLEMENTATION BLOCK GRANT (EDDIBG)

- The Enhancement Development, Design, and Implementation Block Grant (EDDIBG) is supported by the state Clean Water Fund (CWF) as a sub-initiative under CWIP's Water Quality Enhancement Grants funding program established through Act 76. The intent of EDDIBG is to support the development design and implementation of priority water quality enhancement projects.
- EDDIBG supports both Project Development and Design and Implementation projects.
- Historically these have been separate block grant programs through WUV

**ACTIVE GRANT ROUND – ENHANCEMENT
DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION BLOCK
GRANT (EDIBG) PROJECTS ONLY**

Funding Category	Total
All Eligible Project Types: Preliminary Design, Final Design, Implementation	~\$650,000

- Preliminary and Final Design Projects and Final Design and Implementation Projects can be bundled together (not all 3 project types)
- Previous WUV rounds have had separate funding amounts for different project types and for projects over/under \$50,000. These requirements DO NOT apply to this enhancement round.

KEY DATES

July 20, 2023: WUV Enhancement Design and Implementation Block Grant - Request for Proposals released

September 20, 2023: Full Project Application including the Project Readiness and Eligibility Screening due

Mid October 2023: Funding Decisions announced

October 1, 2026: All projects funded through this grant round must be complete with final invoicing and deliverables submitted by October 1, 2026 or no more than 3-months after the completion of the project (whichever one occurs sooner).

APPLICATION PROCESS

Application, Natural Resource Screening, and Supplemental Documents are due on **September 20, 2023**.

To complete submission of the application for this grant round you must submit the following documents:

- **2023 WUV Enhancement Design and Implementation Block Grant Full Application**
- [Enhancement Project Readiness and Eligibility Screening Form](#)
- Applicants should also submit the following documents at time of application submission:
 - Site Plan(s) (**required for implementation projects**)
 - Site Photos (**required for implementation projects**)
 - Written landowner commitment to implement project (**required for implementation projects**)
 - Written landowner commitment to project phase being applied for project (**required for design projects**)
 - Project Feasibility Studies
 - Additional Bid(s), Quote(s), or Proposal(s)

Please note we do not need letters of support from project partners

APPLICATION SUBMISSION

- Complete and submit the application as a single Word or PDF file and submit a second document that combines the Project Readiness and Eligibility Screening Form and all other supplemental documents.
- Email the Full Application and the combined Project Readiness and Eligibility Screening Form and Supplemental Materials to both:

WUV Director Lyn Munno at watershedsunited@gmail.com and WUV Grant Administrator Christian Pelletier at christian@whiteriverpartnership.org

DOES MY PROJECT FIT INTO ENHANCEMENT FUNDING??

- Multi-step process to identify if your project fits into enhancement funding
 - 1) Project Type
 - 2) Meets CWIP Objectives
 - 3) Meets 2023 CWIP Funding Policy Eligibility Criteria
 - 4) Project meets at least one of the 5 statutorily-defined purposes for Enhancement Grant

If you are familiar with WUV's previous DIBG, you will remember all projects had to have a “*primary purpose to improve water quality by reducing nutrient and sediment pollution*” – this is **NO LONGER a requirement for funding**

ALLOWABLE PROJECT TYPES

- For a project to be eligible for this funding, it must fall into one of the following project types:
- Lake Shoreland
- Rivers – Floodplain/Stream Restoration
- Forestry
- Wetlands
- Stormwater
- Roads Project
- Roads/Stormwater Gully
- Agricultural Pollution Prevention
- See the [2023 Enhancement Design/Implementation Block Grant Eligible Projects Types, Standards, Milestones, and Deliverables Spreadsheet](https://watershedsunitedvt.org/resources/block-grants) at <https://watershedsunitedvt.org/resources/block-grants>

CWIP OBJECTIVE

- All projects under the Clean Water Initiative Program (CWIP) must meet one of the following objectives:
 - 1. Minimize Anthropogenic Nutrient and Organic Pollution
 - 2. Protect and Restore Aquatic and Riparian Habitats
 - 3. Minimize Flood and Fluvial Erosion Hazards
 - 4. Minimize Toxic and Pathogenic Pollution and Chemicals of Emerging Concern

PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

1. Project must satisfy all requirements of Eligibility Screens #1-7 in the Eligibility Screening found on pages 9-16 in the [2023 CWIP Funding Policy](#).
2. Project must be non-regulatory
3. Project must be able to secure the DEC 10 year Operations and Maintenance Agreement

2023 CWIP FUNDING POLICY – ELIGIBILITY SCREENS #1-7

- To ensure that you meet the 7 eligibility screens from the [2023 CWIP Funding Policy](#) you will complete the [2023 WUV Project Readiness and Eligibility Screening Form](#)
- Form will guide you to ensure that you have a Watershed Project ID number (all projects and project phases must have a unique ID), screen permit and natural resource impacts, and ensure that you have reviewed critical sections of the 2023 CWIP funding policy.
- This form may be familiar to anyone who has applied to WUV DIBG funding, this iteration has limited DEC staff approval needed for projects that are not being permitted by DEC.

NON-REGULATORY PROJECT

- To be eligible for Enhancement Design and Implementation Block Grant funds (EDIBG), projects cannot be driven by a regulatory requirement. Regulatory projects are those required/compelled by water quality-related regulatory programs.
- Non-regulatory projects (i.e. projects performed voluntarily) are eligible. These voluntary projects are often still subject to regulatory oversight and may require one or more permits.
- There may be cases where an individual project is designed to both fulfill and exceed regulatory requirements. Additional guidance is needed to define eligibility for this scenario. A portion of the project costs may be eligible for EDIBG funds. If this is the case, please consult with DEC as special provisions would be needed to ensure coordinated tracking and reporting across potentially multiple funding and regulatory programs.

STATUTORILY-DEFINED PURPOSES FOR WATER QUALITY ENHANCEMENT GRANTS

- **Projects must meet at least one of the 5 statutorily-defined purposes for Enhancement Grants:**

1. Protect high quality waters,
2. Maintain or improve water quality,
3. Restore degraded or stressed waters,
4. Create resilient watersheds and communities, or
5. Support the public's use and enjoyment of the State's waters

For a project to be eligible for this funding, it must meet at least one of the above purposes. In the application, you will be asked to address in narrative each one of the project purposes that your project will meet. Projects can meet multiple statutory purposes.

DEFINITION – HIGH QUALITY WATERS

- *High Quality Water:* Per the 2017 Vermont Water Quality Standards (§ 29A-105 (c)) “high quality waters” are waters the existing quality of which exceeds any applicable water quality criteria.
- For the purposes of the EDDIBG sub-initiative, “high quality waters” are defined as any waters not listed as altered or impaired in the relevant Tactical Basin Plan. Any eligible clean water project located upstream of a “high quality water” body is considered to have the potential to protect “high quality waters
- See the full definition in the 2023 WUV Enhancement Grant Guidelines at <https://watershedsunitedvt.org/resources/block-grants>

DEFINITION - DEGRADED OR STRESSED WATERS

- Please see the list of impaired waterways in Vermont to determine whether or not your project is in an area with degraded or stressed waters:
<https://dec.vermont.gov/watershed/map/assessment> (list of impaired waters can be found mid page at the link provided).
- If you need clarification on whether your project area is degraded or stressed, please contact the DEC River Scientist or Basin Planner that is responsible for your project area.

DEFINITION – WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

- Enhancement Grant programs have established a broader definition of water quality improvements to include benefits that have historically been considered co-benefits (ex. habitat improvements, flood resiliency, and pollutant reduction). Project components critical towards achieving any of the Enhancement Grant statutory goals are now considered primary (not co-) benefits and are eligible for CWIP funds as long as they meet all other CWIP funding requirements and WUV subgrant requirements.

DEFINITION - CREATE RESILIENT WATERSHEDS AND COMMUNITIES

- Projects that assist with a community's resilience against the ecological responses to a changing climate (e.g. extreme droughts or rains, excessive heat, biodiversity decline, etc.) are eligible as long as they meet all other eligibility criteria.

DEFINITION - SUPPORT THE PUBLIC'S USE
AND ENJOYMENT OF THE STATE'S WATERS

- Signage, condensed access, and/or targeted outreach and education surrounding a specific project are all considered eligible project components and primary project benefits to “support the public’s use and enjoyment of the State’s waters.” Other restoration-focused activities may also de facto “support the public’s use and enjoyment of the State’s waters” by making the waters more swimmable, fishable, and/or drinkable.
- WUV will take into consideration potential adverse impacts to public’s use and enjoyment of state’s waters

ELIGIBLE PROJECT SUMMARY

- Complex process that requires using the project types table, project eligibility screening document, 2023 CWIP Funding Policy, and Enhancement statutory defined purpose. Please reach out with questions
- **Good News:** The scope of eligible projects has increased. If there are projects that have been tricky to fund in the past (culvert replacements with AOP focus, floodplain restoration that has a river access improvement aspect, etc) these projects may be a great fit for this funding.
- If you are familiar with WUV's previous DIBG funding, almost all the projects that were previously fundable under DIBG can now be funded under the EDIBG program. Although there are more screening steps – this program ultimately opens up more projects for funding from the “tricky to fund” projects mentioned above to “standard” projects in the listed eligible project types table.

INELIGIBLE ENTITIES

The following entities are ineligible for applying for DEC block grant funds:

- Private citizens, individuals
- Private for-profit businesses and industries
- Private for-profit colleges and universities
- Federal agencies
- DEC programs

INELIGIBLE PROJECTS

- Please see the full list of ineligible projects in the WUV 2023 Enhancement Grant Guidelines at <https://watershedsunitedvt.org/resources/block-grants>

Quick highlights of ineligible projects:

- Projects that can be wholly funded through other grant sources. Projects may be eligible if other options are ill-suited, insufficient, or poorly timed and justification is provided
- Operation and maintenance activities of prior implemented clean water projects (e.g., mowing, weeding, replanting, and road re-grading)
- Dam Removal and Riparian Buffer Planting project types aren't eligible through the EDIBG
- Restoration or stabilization of in-gully channels caused by stormwater or road runoff unless the project also addresses precipitating upstream flow (Please note gully projects are eligible if they do address upstream flow).
- Operational stormwater General Permit 3-9050 projects (Three Acres Projects)
- Large scale site mowing to manage for invasive species like Japanese Knotweed (No invasive specie management projects)

INELIGIBLE EXPENSES

- Project components that are above and beyond those necessary to achieve the project's enhancement purpose (as listed under eligibility screen #1). For example, where a project's stakeholders prefer higher cost materials or a more complex design than what is necessary to achieve the project's clean water outcomes, the cost differential must be covered by another funding source. Budget proposals can provide reasonable justification if need be. These additional expenses may be considered leverage.
- Expenses incurred outside award duration
- Annual fees associated with permits that require/compel implementation of the clean water project
- In Lieu Fee payments to mitigate wetland impacts
- Tools and/or equipment, unless intent of tool or equipment is to assist with implementation of clean water projects. Eligible tool or equipment purchases must have an expected useful life of more than one year. Tools are defined as having a per unit cost of less than \$5,000 and are not subject to DEC's Equipment Purchase Policy. Tools may be sold, or otherwise disposed of with no further obligation to DEC. Items with a per unit cost of equal to or greater than \$5,000 are defined as "equipment" and subject to DEC's Equipment Purchase Policy. See Appendix D of CWIP FY 2023 Guidelines for more information
- Office supplies such as computers, cell phones, uniforms/staff apparel
- Food/beverage/event space costs (such as for a meeting)
- AmeriCorps host site or member costs
- General outreach and/or education; unless specific only to the project and clean water purposes
- Political advocacy
- Fundraising and grant writing

PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA

- **Project Purpose:** How does the project meet the 5 listed statutorily-defined purposes for EDIBG Grant. Projects will be evaluated on both how well the project meets a purpose and also how many of the statutorily-defined purposes the project meets. For example, a project that highly meets one project purpose will be competitive with a project that moderately meets 2-3 project purposes.
- **Project Scale:** Does the project seem reasonable to complete given the timeframe of the grant, the capacity of the organizations, the complexity of the partnerships and permits, and the budget?
- **Project Likelihood:** Does the project design and/or implementation have a high chance for success? Are there barriers to this work being completed? What is the financial risk if that is the case? How likely will the project be completed on time? For design projects we are evaluating likelihood of design completion and of resulting likelihood of project being implemented.
- **Project Need:** Is there a demonstrated need for the work? And do the DEC EDIBG funds fill a need where other funds are not available?
- **Project Budget:** Is the project cost effective for the scope of work proposed? Does the project fit into WUV's available budget, are all costs eligible (see CWIP guidelines)?
- **Environmental justice :** how your project will support an Environmental Justice Focus population or an otherwise historically under-represented group? (Please note this criteria will give applicants an opportunity to add additional scoring points to application but will not have full scoring value as the above selection criteria)

MATCH/LEVERAGE REQUIREMENTS

- WUV ***has no required match commitment*** for this grant round. Regardless, match is always appreciated by DEC and WUV, so please include anticipated match amounts as applicable and available. With the limited funding under this round, WUV may not be able to fully fund high cost implementation projects. For these type of projects, other funding sources would be considered beneficial. Please make sure to indicate in the application narrative section if partial funding would be an option for your project.
- If there is a strong benefit to private landowners in your project, WUV will consider match/leverage funds provided when evaluating the project.
- Under this round of funding, awarded EDIBG funds can be used as required match for other funders. If you plan to use this funding as match for other received awards, please make sure to indicate this in the budget section of your grant application.

INVOICING

- The EDIBG grant is a cost-reimbursable grant
- WUV will reimburse subgrantees immediately upon receipt of funds from DEC
- DEC Business Office shutdown in month of June impacts WUVs ability to process invoices during implementation season
- Please be aware of the timeline for WUV to provide payment when applying and creating a timeline for this grant

VERMONT DIVISION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION (VDHP) PROJECT REVIEW

- Most projects under the EDIBG must complete a VDHP Project Review if they are awarded funding.
- The VDHP review is required in order to identify a project's potential impact to historic buildings and structures, historic districts, historic landscapes and settings, and to known or potential archaeological resources. These resources are known collectively as “Historic Properties” or “Historic Sites.” This consultative process, also known as Project Review, occurs between the Vermont State Historic Preservation Office (VDHP) and project proponent.
- This process may result in significant budget increases to projects. WUV will be as flexible as possible in this grant program to support sub-grantees as they navigate the VDHP review process over the life of the grant.
- Vermont DEC CWIP VDHP Webinar: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=96lsiteAjUw>

VERMONT DIVISION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION (VDHP) PROJECT REVIEW (CONT.)

Exempt project types:

- Project development
- Stormwater/Road Equipment
- Forestry Equipment
- Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination (IDDE)
- River Corridor and Wetland Easements
- Riparian Buffer Plantings
- Operation and Maintenance activities

VERMONT DIVISION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION (VDHP) PROJECT REVIEW (CONT.)

Conditional Exempt Project Types:

- Agricultural Pollution Prevention
- Roads
- Stormwater
 - Roads/SW Gullies
- Forestry

These project types are only conditional exempt if they meet all of the following conditions:

- a. Project involves no new ground disturbance beyond the previously disturbed horizontal (surface area) and vertical (depth) footprint
- b. Project causes no direct or indirect impact or disturbance to any man-made building or structure (including dams, culverts, and bridges) more than 50 years old
- c. Project causes no direct or indirect impact or disturbance to any federally listed historic building or structure
- d. Project Area of Potential Effect is not located within, does not intersect with, and is not adjacent to a state-listed historic district, Designated Downtown, or Village Center
- e. Project is not located within, does not intersect with, and is not adjacent to a federally listed historic district or site

VERMONT DIVISION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION (VDHP) PROJECT REVIEW (CONT.)

- VDHP Review Process Overview
- Step 1: Confirm Project Type Confirm project type is either non-exempt or conditionally exempt and fails to meet the project qualifications
- Step 2: Complete a VDHP Preliminary Project Review: [Project Review Form](#)
- Step 3: Proceed with Cultural Resource Assessments (if applicable)
 1. Archaeological Resource Assessment (ARA)
 2. Phase I site identification survey (in some cases, the need for a Phase I site identification survey may be readily apparent without an ARA).
 3. Phase II Site Evaluation
 4. Phase III Data Recovery (generally completed as a mitigation measure)
- Step 4: Address Adverse Effects (if applicable)
 1. Redesign of one or more project components;
 2. Specific construction conditions;
 3. Construction monitoring by a qualified Archaeologist and/or Architectural Historian/Historian;
 4. Site documentation and archiving, or public facing informational signage; and
 5. Rehabilitation of an affected historic building or structure in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

PROJECT APPLICATION OVERVIEW

- [WUV 2023 PROJECT APPLICATION](#)

EDDIBG FUNDING PARTNERS

DEC has awarded the Enhancement Grant funds to 3 entities:

1. WUV
2. Natural Resources Conservation Council (NRCC)
3. Mount Ascutney Regional Commission (MARC)

The funding requirements are the same for all entities, though the application and grant administration process may vary somewhat. While we encourage for administration purposes that if the timing works out NRCDs apply to NRCC, watershed groups apply to WUV and municipalities apply through MARC, all eligible entities can apply through any Enhancement Grant holder and all entities currently hold grant agreements with multiple eligible subgrantees. WUV, NRCC and MARC will coordinate on project applications as needed. Both MARC and NRCC are planning on having fall grant rounds.

EDIBG AND WATER QUALITY RESTORATION FORMULA GRANT

- If your project is in the Champlain and Memphremagog Basins and has particularly high phosphorus reduction numbers, it is likely the project will fit better in the Water Quality Restoration Formula Grants program.
- WUV's application is designed to screen any potential projects that could be a better fit for Formula funding, while also providing applicants the ability to describe why projects in the Champlain and Memphremagog Basin may be a better fit for EDIBG funding.
- WUV will work with applicants to submit application to applicable Clean Water Services Providers (CWSPs) to access Water Quality Restoration Formula grant funds if it is deemed to be a better fit.

QUESTIONS??

- Thank you so much for taking time to learn about the Enhancement Grant Program – please reach out to us with any additional questions!