

Nonpoint Source Grant Program Frequently Asked Questions

1. **What if my proposed project is being undertaken pursuant to a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit, including a municipal stormwater permit or municipal separate sewer system permit?**

Projects, which include activities required under a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System, are not eligible for Clean Water Act section 319(h) (CWA 319[h]) funding. Projects, which include activities under a municipal separate sewer system, may be eligible if they are excluded or exempt from the municipal separate sewer system permit. See project eligibility requirements in the [Program Guidelines](#). Please contact your Regional Water Board Grant Coordinator ([Attachment 2](#)) if you have questions regarding your project's eligibility.

2. **When completing my concept proposal on-line in the Financial Assistance Application Submittal Tool, how do I determine the amounts to list for the "Project Budget," "Funds Requested," and "Local Match" fields?**

The match is calculated as a percentage of the total project budget, not as a percentage of the grant funds requested. See the example below for reference.

Example:

Project Budget (total project): \$1,000,000
Local Match: \$250,000 (25% of \$1,000,000)
Funds Requested: \$750,000 (\$1,000,000 - \$250,000)

Septic System Example:

Project Budget (total project): \$1,000,000
Local Match: \$750,000 (75% of \$1,000,000)
Funds Requested: \$250,000 (\$1,000,000 - \$750,000)

3. **What are the funding match requirements for the Nonpoint Source Grant Program?**

This program requires a minimum match of 25% of the **total project cost** (grant funds plus match) with the exception of septic system projects which requires a minimum match of 75% of the total project cost. The match requirement may be waived or reduced for projects that directly benefit a disadvantaged community(ies) as outlined in [Appendix 4](#) and Section D and Section E of the [Program Guidelines](#).

For CWA 319(h) projects, "Funding match" means funds made available by the applicant from non-state sources, unless the applicant is a state agency. State agencies and Timber Fund projects can use state funds and services for the funding match.

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Applicants who are not state agencies can use, but are not limited to, federal funds, local funding, or donated and volunteer services from non-state sources. Contact the Division of Financial Assistance ([Attachment 2](#)) to verify whether the match source is appropriate.

4. **What types of funding match can be used?**

Contact the Division of Financial Assistance to determine whether the match source is appropriate for the Project. See [Attachment 2](#) for contact information.

5. **Can the total project cost over the amount of \$800,000 for CWA 319(h) and \$1,000,000 for Timber Fund Projects indicated in the Program Guidelines?**

Yes, the total project cost can be more than \$800,000 for CWA 319(h) and \$1,000,000 for Timber Fund. However, funding is limited to those levels (\$800,000/\$1,000,000) per project type. For example, if the total project cost is \$1.25 million for an CWA 319(h) project, the maximum amount of CWA 319(h) requested for that project can only be \$800,000. The remaining amount (\$450,000) needs to be covered through match funding.

6. **What kind of documentation is needed for match (in-kind and/or funding)?**

Document match activities with photos and invoices for costs associated with match activities. Provide information in progress reports, which are generally submitted with invoices.

If the applicant is requested to submit a full proposal, they are required to submit a letter of commitment for the match as one of attachments.

7. **If the applicant does not meet any of the Program Preferences, can they still continue in the RFP process?**

No. The applicant must meet the Program Preference requirement (See [Program Guidelines](#)).

8. **Where can I find the latitude and longitude coordinates, and the 12 digit hydrologic unit code and watershed name for my project location?**

Please try the following website: <http://www.trails.com/topo.aspx?state=CN> enter the name of a place nearest to your project location, and run a search for it. The results will include the latitude and longitude for the location. For the 12 digit hydrologic unit code and watershed name use <http://iaspub.epa.gov/pls/grts/f?p=110:95:4338160915976545::NO>.

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9. **What is a nine-element watershed-based plan?**

The nine-elements watershed-based plan, which are explained in detail in [Appendix 1](#) of the Program Guidelines , are:

1. CAUSES AND SOURCES;
2. EXPECTED LOAD REDUCTIONS;
3. MANAGEMENT MEASURES;
4. TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE;
5. INFORMATION/EDUCATION;
6. SCHEDULE;
7. MEASURABLE MILESTONES;
8. EVALUATION OF PROGRESS; AND
9. MONITORING

10. **Does the applicant need to reproduce the nine-element watershed-base plan in their final product?**

No, the applicant needs only to refer to the nine-element watershed- base plan and does not need to reproduce them. However, the applicant is required to provide information regarding the nine-elements in their Watershed Plan(s) for which their Project is included, if asked to do so. In the Full Proposal Phase, the applicant will be required to provide weblinks or copies of the plans. See current [Program Guidelines](#) for the NPS Grant Program Solicitation.

11. **Can Clean Water Act 319(h) funds be used to pay for implementation project monitoring since the guidelines state that operation and maintenance, including post construction project performance and monitoring costs are not reimbursable costs?**

Short-term monitoring for project performance and effectiveness is an eligible cost under the NPS Grant Program if it is conducted within the grant period. Long-term monitoring after the grant period is not a reimbursable cost.

12. **Can we start implementing our project before the grant agreement is finalized?**

Match funds can be used to cover costs that are incurred before the grant has been executed. However, using match funding to cover costs before the execution of the grant is at the risk of the grantee. NPS Grant Program funds cannot be used to cover costs incurred before the grant has been executed.

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13. Can time spent preparing a proposal be reimbursed?

No, the expense of preparing proposals cannot be reimbursed.

14. What is required for Global Positioning System (GPS) coordinates?

For Clean Water Act 319(h), GPS coordinates only need to be reported for the location of the stream reach, not for the exact location of the Management Practice implemented.

15. How will projects be selected for funding?

The Nonpoint Source Grant Program Solicitation will be a two-step process. In the Concept Proposal Phase, each complete and eligible Concept Proposals will be reviewed by a Technical Review Panel (Review Panel) consisting of staff from one or more Regional Water Quality Control Boards (Regional Water Boards), the State Water Board, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA). Following the panel review, all complete and eligible Concept Proposals will be ranked by consensus of the Review Panel. The most competitive, eligible Concept Proposals will be invited to submit Full Proposals to a level of at least 125% of available grant funds.

After a thorough review of all Full Proposals by the same Review Panel, a recommended funding list will be developed and presented to State Water Board Executive Director for approval.

16. To whom should we send letters of support for our Full Proposals?

Letters of support are optional, and are not considered in the technical evaluation of the proposal. Letters may be submitted in the Full Proposal Stage through Financial Assistance Application Submittal Tool.

17. What types of landowner access agreements are needed?

If your project requires landowner access and you are selected for funding, you will need to provide adequate access to State Water Board, Regional Water Board and U.S. EPA staff to inspect and verify the project is being implemented according to the grant agreement. There should be a process in place to obtain landowner agreement at the time of submitting a Full Proposal (if applicant is requested to submit a Full Proposal). Landowner access agreements, if applicable, must be in place before the projects starts.

18. After the project is implemented, what type of access to the project site needs

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to be provided?

Grantees must allow access to the project site to both State Water Board and U.S. EPA for the service life of any practices installed. The service life of the practice can range from one to twenty years.

19. **Are organizations limited to the number of projects they can submit?**

No, there are no limits to the number of projects that an organization can submit. For example, the applicant can submit a proposal for both CWA 319(h) and Timber Fund Projects.