



## *CWSRF Wastewater and Stormwater Planning Guidance Document April 2022*

### **Wastewater/ Stormwater Planning Principal Forgiveness**

The NHDES Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) loan program is offering up to \$100,000 in principal forgiveness for wastewater and/or stormwater planning evaluations.

Eligible planning efforts will have a vision of implementing construction and/or operations actions that have a tangible water quality benefit.

CWSRF is a federal-state partnership that provides communities with low-cost financing (loans) for a wide range of water quality infrastructure projects. Once all eligible project expenses are incurred, and subsequently disbursed, the loan is closed, and principal forgiveness is then applied to the principal balance.

Communities must receive **authority to borrow** for the entire loan amount through a town warrant article or city equivalent process, even if the full principal amount is forgiven. The CWSRF loan amount may be greater than \$100,000, depending upon the estimated cost for the project but only up to \$100,000 per project will be forgiven.

To maintain eligibility for CWSRF principal forgiveness, NHDES must approve the work scope and disbursement requests. Prior to review of the full loan application, applicants will submit work scope proposals related to planning evaluations for approval by Watershed Assistance Section for stormwater projects or Wastewater Engineering Bureau Design Review Section for wastewater projects. The Grants Management Section will assist with loan processing and disbursements.

### **Eligible Projects**

There are many eligible activities that fall within the scope of planning. Planning activities that have a reasonable prospect of resulting in a capital project are eligible. Principal forgiveness is offered only to municipalities.

The following activities are eligible, pending NHDES approval:

- Cost and Effectiveness analyses.
- Capital improvement plans.
- Integrated planning.
- Long-term control plans.
- Energy audit implementation plans.
- Wastewater and stormwater management plans.
- Facility plans.
- Improving the data-driven decision support/business-case development ability of an existing asset management program (AMP) to incorporate additional data sets into the AMP such as, but not limited to:
  - criticality/risk data from a facility plan or vulnerability assessment.
  - asset level condition assessment data.
  - CMOM data and related work; or
  - Energy data.
- Planning activities that assess a POTW's vulnerability to extreme weather and climate change:
  - Risk/vulnerability assessments.
  - Emergency preparedness, response, and recovery plans, security plans/safety plans.
  - Water conservation/drought management plans.
  - Climate adaptation plans.
- Environmental management systems.
- Watershed management plans, must be consistent with EPA Watershed Plan Elements a-i.
- Nitrogen or Phosphorus Load Reduction Plans.
- Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) implementation plans.
- Assessment of project effectiveness:
  - Equipment (e.g., sensors, meters, gauges, hardware, and software used to store and interpret data).
  - Activities (e.g., sampling, lab work, data analysis).

## Minimum Requirements

To maintain principal forgiveness eligibility, all eligible planning projects must meet the following requirements.

### ***All Planning Projects***

The scope of work must include elements addressed in one or more of the following templates:

- Watershed Management (“a-i”) plan: [Handbook for Developing Watershed Plans to Restore and Protect Our Waters | US EPA](#).
- [2019 New Hampshire Nonpoint Source Management Program Plan](#).
- [MS4 compliance](#).
- [Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan](#).
- Basis of Design Reports
  - For Wastewater Projects: Outlined in [Env-Wq 707](#).
  - For Stormwater Projects: [Guidance BDR for Stormwater](#).

In addition, the scope of work must include all the following elements:

- Vision statement or summary of project goals. This should include the vision of the planning project and the overarching project/goal that will result in water quality benefits that are measurable.
- Breakdown of tasks with clearly defined roles.
- Three meetings that include NHDES attendance: kick-off, mid-level and wrap-up.
- Draft reports and documents will be provided to NHDES for review and comment.
- Final documents will be provided to NHDES in electronic form.

### ***Eligibility of Costs:***

Expenses directly related to planning are eligible for CWSRF funding, subject to prior approval by NHDES. Typical expenses that may be incurred include, but are not limited to:

- Equipment purchases/rental such as GPS and tablets.
- Software purchases.
- Laboratory fees.
- Consulting fees\*.

\*If you wish to hire a consultant/engineer they must be chosen using Qualifications Based Selection (QBS) procedures and use the [standard state engineering contract](#) available on the NHDES website.

### ***NHDES Review and Approval***

Work scopes and contracts need to be pre-approved by NHDES **prior to** entering into a CWSRF loan **AND prior to** initiating work.

### ***Deliverables and NHDES Oversight***

To maintain eligibility for CWSRF principal forgiveness, NHDES must attend the kick-off, mid-level and wrap-up meetings and be notified in advance of other meetings and trainings relative to the project. NHDES also requires a report to be developed as a deliverable for a planning loan.

### **Questions/Contact Information**

For wastewater projects/questions/approvals, contact Dennis Greene, P.E. at [dennis.j.greene@des.nh.gov](mailto:dennis.j.greene@des.nh.gov).

For stormwater projects/questions/approvals, contact Deborah Loiselle at [deborah.s.loiselle@des.nh.gov](mailto:deborah.s.loiselle@des.nh.gov).