



# *ARPA Wastewater and Stormwater Planning Guidance Document*

*March 2022*

## **Wastewater/ Stormwater Planning ARPA Grant Funding**

Through newly available American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding, the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) is currently offering grant opportunities to fund planning projects identified from the 2021 Project Priority List for the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF), and potential additional solicitations. Up to **\$100,000 per project is available as a grant.**

Communities must receive **authority to accept grants** for the entire grant amount through the appropriate avenue for the municipality prior to entering into the grant agreement with NHDES. For communities that will be supplementing the project cost with a Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) loan, you will also need to receive Authority to Borrow, and complete and submit a CWSRF loan agreement. Contact your project manager for details.

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

## **Eligible Projects**

There are many eligible activities that fall within the scope of planning. Eligible planning efforts will have a vision of implementing construction and/or operations actions that have a tangible water quality benefit.

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.
- Planning activities that assess a publicly owned treatment works' (POTW's) vulnerability to extreme weather and climate change:
  - Risk/vulnerability assessments.



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- 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-l.
  - 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 grant 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.](#)



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In addition, the scope of work must include all of 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 tangible water quality benefits that are measurable.
- Breakdown of tasks with clearly defined roles.
- Three meetings that may include NHDES attendance: kick-off, mid-level and wrap-up. Stormwater projects require NHDES attendance at all three meetings. NHDES will be invited to all other meetings but are not required to attend.
- 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 grant 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;
- Laboratory fees;
- Consulting fees\*.

\*If you wish to hire a consultant/engineer they should be chosen using Qualifications Based Selection (QBS) procedures as described in Env-Wq 509, for both stormwater and wastewater planning. All projects must use the applicable [standard state engineering contract](#) available on the NHDES website. All projects funded with ARPA grants must meet the requirements of Uniform Guidance 2 CFR 200.317 through 2 CFR 200.327 for procurement. Documentation of procurement procedures will be required. QBS for engineering services satisfies this requirement and is strongly recommended for projects that will pursue funding under CWSRF for future phases, as it is a requirement under that program.

## *NHDES Review and Approval:*

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



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## *Deliverables and NHDES Oversight:*

To maintain eligibility for ARPA grant funding, NHDES must attend meetings as defined in the scope of work 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 grant funded planning project.

## **Questions/Contact Information**

For wastewater projects/questions/approvals, contact Dennis Greene, P.E. at [dennis.greene@des.nh.gov](mailto:dennis.greene@des.nh.gov) or Sarah Ridyard, P.E. at [sarah.b.ridyard@des.nh.gov](mailto:sarah.b.ridyard@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)