NH DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
CLEAN WATER STATE REVOLVING FUND
2024 RANKING CRITERIA
FOR STORMWATER PLANNING AND/OR INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT PRE-APPLICATIONS

The Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) provides financial assistance for planning, design and construction of eligible water pollution control infrastructure projects. Annual capitalization grants through the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), combined with state match and loan repayment funds, are used to provide funding for a variety of activities to eligible entities throughout the state.

The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) has developed a ranking system to prioritize projects in accordance with federal requirements and water quality goals. The criteria used to evaluate and rank eligible project pre-applications are summarized in the table below, and each of the ranking criteria categories is detailed in the narrative on the following pages.

RANKING CRITERIA - STORMWATER PROJECTS (Maximum 100 points)

Category 1: PROTECTION OF WATER QUALITY, PUBLIC HEALTH & THE ENVIRONMENT (35 points maximum)	
Project Addresses:	**Points**
a) Water quality impairment	25
b) NPDES MS4 compliance issue	20
c) Federal or state administrative order or consent decree	20
d) Chronic flooding that causes a water quality problem	15
e) Source water/wellhead protection areas	10
f) Maintain water quality in unimpaired watersheds	5

Points = sum of 1(a) to 1(f); 35 max

Category 2: WATER QUALITY PLAN (25 points maximum)	
Project Addresses:	**Points**
a) 2020-2024 NH Nonpoint Source Management Program Plan	15
b) Watershed–based plan that meets Clean Water Act Section 319 guidelines	15
c) 2010 Piscataqua Region Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan	15
d) Resilient Tidal Crossings: An Assessment and Prioritization to Address New Hampshire's Tidal Crossing Infrastructure for Coastal Resilience	15
e) New Hampshire's Cyanobacteria Plan: A Statewide Strategy	15
f) Municipal Stormwater Asset Management Program	15
g) Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL)	15

Points = sum of 2(a) to 2(g); 25 max

Category 3: GREEN PROJECT RESERVE (25 points maximum)	
Project Addresses:	**Points**
a) Disconnection of impervious cover from the stormwater drainage system	20
b) Protection or restoration of natural hydrology, floodplains, and wetlands	20
c) Environmentally innovative infrastructure	10

Points = sum of 3(a) to 3(c); 25 max

Category 4: SUSTAINABILITY (15 points maximum)	
Project Addresses:	**Points**
a) Aging Infrastructure	10
b) Flooding/Resiliency	10
c) Local Capacity	10
d) Relative value to the public and environment	10
e) Smart Growth as defined in RSA 9-B:3	10

Points = sum of 4(a) to 4(e); 15 max

CATEGORY 1 - PROTECTION OF WATER QUALITY, PUBLIC HEALTH & THE ENVIRONMENT (Maximum 35 points):

a) **Water quality impairment (25 points):**
   - Project identified in the state's 305(b)/303(d) report will receive the most points in this category (see Surface Water Quality Assessment Viewer).
   - Project must result in pollutant load reduction or other measured water quality improvement.

b) **NPDES MS4 Compliance Issue (20 points):**
   - Project that implements a requirement in the municipality's NPDES MS4 permit or the stormwater management plan incorporated in the permit.

c) **Federal or state administrative order or consent decree (20 points):**
   - The public owner is under a court order or a state or federal consent decree, or a state or federal administrative order, or administrative order by consent requiring the owner to address pollution control issues by complying with a schedule of events.

d) **Chronic flooding that causes a water quality problem (15 points):**
   - Excess bacteria, sediment or other pollutants released to a water body.
   - A stream that is out of equilibrium as evidenced by excessive bank erosion, channel incision or head cutting.
   - Barrier to aquatic life passage.

e) **Source water/wellhead protection areas (10 points):**
   - Project located within a source water or wellhead protection area through which contaminants will be removed.

f) **Improve water quality in unimpaired watersheds (5 points):**
   - Project located in unimpaired watersheds.

CATEGORY 2 - WATER QUALITY PLAN (Maximum 25 points):

a) **Recommendation in the 2020-2024 NH Nonpoint Source Management Program Plan (15 points):**
   - Project that implements a recommendation in the Plan.

b) **Creation of watershed-based plan that meets Clean Water Act Section 319 Guidelines (15 points):**
   - Project that addresses fully, or partially creates an a-i watershed-based plan or approved alternative plan.

c) **Recommendation in the 2010 Piscataqua Region Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (15 points):**
   - Project addresses an action item identified in the Plan.

d) **Resilient Tidal Crossings an Assessment and Prioritization to Address New Hampshire's Tidal Crossing Infrastructure for Coastal Resilience (15 points):**
   - Project addresses specific action called out in the Resilient Tidal Crossings document.

e) **New Hampshire's Cyanobacteria Plan: A Statewide Strategy (15 points):**
   - Project addresses specific action called out in New Hampshire's Cyanobacteria Plan.

f) **Municipal Stormwater Asset Management Program (15 points):**
   - Project addresses specific action(s) called out in municipalities stormwater asset management program.

g) Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) (15 points):

- Project addresses an action item identified in a TMDL or expands upon a TMDL to create an a-i watershed-based plan or approved alternative plan.

CATEGORY 3 - GREEN PROJECT RESERVE (Maximum 25 points)

The goal of the Green Project Reserve (GPR) is to guide funding toward projects that utilize green practices to: complement and augment hard or gray infrastructure; adopt practices that reduce the environmental footprint of water and wastewater treatment, help municipalities adapt to climate change; enhance water conservation; adopt more sustainable solutions to wet weather flows; promote low impact development with respect to stormwater runoff; restore natural hydrology; and promote innovative approaches to water management problems.

Green Infrastructure includes a wide array of practices at multiple scales that manage wet weather and restore natural hydrology by infiltrating, evapotranspiring, harvesting, and using stormwater. On a regional scale, green infrastructure is the preservation and restoration of natural landscape features, such as forests, floodplains and wetlands, coupled with policies such as infill and redevelopment that reduce overall imperviousness in a watershed. On a local scale, green infrastructure consists of site and community-specific practices within development, redevelopment or retrofits, such as bioretention, trees, green roofs, permeable pavements and cisterns.

Stormwater and nonpoint source projects qualify for Green Project Reserve points if they implement Green Infrastructure. EPA guidance document: 2012 CWSRF 10% Green Project Reserve: Guidance for Determining Project Eligibility

Green Project Reserve projects include:

a) Disconnection of impervious cover from the stormwater drainage system (20 points): Indicate specific GPR Guidance Document reference on pre-application from 1.0 Green Infrastructure, Section 1.2 (i.e. 1.2-1, 1.2-2, etc.).

- 1.2-1 Implementation of green streets (combinations of green infrastructure practices in transportation rights-of-ways), for either new development, redevelopment or retrofits including: permeable pavement, bioretention, trees, green roofs and other practices such as constructed wetlands that can be designed to mimic natural hydrology and reduce effective imperviousness at one or more scales. (Vactor trucks and other capital equipment necessary to maintain green infrastructure projects are not eligible for planning funds, however they are eligible for infrastructure funds.)
- 1.2-2 Wet weather management systems for parking areas including: permeable pavement, bioretention, trees, green roofs, and other practices such as constructed wetlands that can be designed to mimic natural hydrology and reduce effective imperviousness at one or more scales.
- 1.2-3 Implementation of comprehensive street tree or urban forestry programs, including expansion of tree boxes to manage additional stormwater and enhance tree health.
- 1.2-4 Stormwater harvesting and reuse projects, such as cisterns and the systems that allow for utilization of harvested stormwater, including pipes to distribute stormwater for reuse.
- 1.2-5 Downspout disconnection to remove stormwater from sanitary, combined sewers and separate storm sewers and manage runoff onsite.
- 1.2-6 Comprehensive retrofit programs designed to keep wet weather discharges out of all types of sewer systems using green infrastructure technologies and approaches such as green roofs, green walls, trees and urban reforestation, permeable pavements and bioretention cells, and turf removal and replacement with native vegetation or trees that improve permeability.

b) Protection or restoration of natural hydrology, floodplains, and wetlands (20 points): Indicate specific GPR Guidance Document reference on pre-application from 1.0 Green Infrastructure, Section 1.2 (i.e. 1.2-7, 1.2-8, etc.).

- 1.2-7 Establishment or restoration of permanent riparian buffers, floodplains, wetlands and other natural features, including vegetated buffers or soft bioengineered stream banks.
    - This includes stream day lighting that removes natural streams from artificial pipes and restores a natural stream morphology that is capable of accommodating a range of hydrologic conditions while also providing biological integrity.
    - Restoration and protection of stream connectivity with respect to aquatic life passage through perched, shallow, or undersized culvert replacement, dam removal and stream crossing designs that provide for passage of fish and aquatic animals, maintain natural stream conditions and improve protection of roads and property from potential effects of floods.
    - Effective stream crossings may include bridges, open bottom arches and culverts that span and remain buried in the stream bed.
    - A stream crossing that has been identified in the NH Aquatic Restoration Mapper that shows reduced or no aquatic organism passage (AOP).
- 1.2-8 Projects that involve the management of wetlands to improve water quality and/or support green infrastructure efforts (e.g., flood attenuation).
- 1.2-10 Fee simple purchase of land or easements on land that has a direct benefit to water quality, such as riparian and wetland protection or restoration.

c) Environmentally innovative infrastructure (10 points): Indicate specific GPR Guidance Document reference on pre-application from 4.0 Environmentally Innovative, Section 4.0 (i.e. 4.1-4.2).

- 4.1 Build resilient, sustainable infrastructure that promotes innovation.
- 4.2-1 Total/integrated water resources management planning likely to result in a capital project.
- 4.2-2 Utility Sustainability Plan consistent with EPA SRF's sustainability policy.

CATEGORY 4 - SUSTAINABILITY (Maximum 15 points)

a) Aging infrastructure (10 points):

- Addresses infrastructure that is beyond expected lifespan or in failure.

b) Flooding/Resiliency (10 points):

- Addresses current or anticipated flooding issues and obtain the capacity for a community or system to proactively prepare for and promptly recover from hazardous events such as hurricanes, storms and/or the effects of long-term sea level rise, rather than the ability to simply react and respond to events. Impacts, assessment and adaptation approaches vary, but some examples include:
    - Designing the project with extreme precipitation projections forecasting.
    - Designing the project to account for flood projections and or mapping.
    - Mapping projected future flooding.
    - Riverbank erosion assessment.
    - Critical infrastructure vulnerability assessment.
    - Development and implementation of increased flooding adaptation measures.
    - Elevation of infrastructure above projected flood levels.
    - Development of emergency response plans.
    - Addresses a stream crossing that has been identified in the NH Aquatic Restoration Mapper that shows reduced hydraulic capacity.

c) Local capacity (10 points):

- Commitment of the applicant's support network, and capacity to complete the proposed project. Ranking will be based upon the grantee's description and/or demonstration of their team's ability to successfully complete the proposed project.

d) Relative value to the public and environment (10 points):

- Consider the availability (access), and extent of use of the waterbody. Consider uses including, but not limited to: drinking water supply; public recreational opportunities; aquatic and terrestrial habitat benefits; and potential for increased public use and improved habitat. Consider anticipated cost of corrections relative to their benefit.

e) Smart Growth as defined in RSA 9-B:3 (10 points):

- Control of haphazard and unplanned development and the use of land which results over time, in the inflation of the amount of land used per unit of human development, and of the degree of dispersal between such land areas.

- Development and use of land in such a manner that its physical, visual, or audible consequences are appropriate to the traditional and historic New Hampshire landscape. Smart growth may include denser development of existing communities, encouragement of mixed uses in such communities, the protection of villages and planning so as to create ease of movement within and among communities. Smart growth preserves the integrity of open space in agricultural, forested and undeveloped areas.