

## Notice of Grant Application Opportunity

### US Environmental Protection Agency's 2006-2007 Targeted Watersheds Initiative

August 17, 2006

To further preserve and restore the country's waterways, the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has recently called on interested and eligible parties to apply for the fourth round of targeted watershed grants.

The Targeted Watershed Grant Program, administered by EPA, was first proposed by President Bush in 2003 to protect and improve waterways across the country. In the first three years of its history, the Targeted Watersheds Grant Program has awarded nearly \$40 million to various watershed organizations across the nation. The selected organizations were chosen to receive funding (average grant amount is about \$700,000) because their work plans were deemed as the most likely to achieve environmental results in a relatively short-time period.

From within the New England region and during the first three years of the Targeted Watersheds Grant Program:

- A total of thirty proposals/nominations have been submitted.
- Six of thirty nominations from throughout New England were selected for funding.
- A watershed receiving 2005 funding is located in the State of Maine.
- Watersheds receiving 2004 funding are located in the states of New Hampshire and Massachusetts.
- Watersheds receiving 2003 grant funding are located in the states of Massachusetts, Maine & Rhode Island.
- The Governor of Vermont has nominated a total of 5 proposals and endorsed 4 other inter-state projects.

For 2006, the competitive Targeted Watersheds Grant Program will have up to \$19 million available on a national basis to support community-based approaches and activities to help local water resources and achieve quick, measurable environmental results.

EPA is continuing its focus on coalition-based strategies for improving water resources on a watershed level, including activities such as attaining water quality standards and protecting and restoring the natural and beneficial uses of floodplains. This aspect of the Program, known to focus on **implementation efforts**, seeks to build on existing partnerships and coalitions that have evaluated and assessed their watershed, devised a technically sound watershed plan and are ready to embark on steps to implement their plans.

A new element, involving **capacity building**, has been added to the Program for 2006. The objective of the capacity building component of the Program is to develop the capacity of watershed groups. The capacity building objective is two-fold: (1) promote the organizational development and growth of local watershed partnerships and stakeholders committed to improving and maintaining the natural and economic resources of their watersheds; and (2) provide training and technical assistance to these groups so they can better address watershed-based problems and help develop sustainable solutions.

Proponents of watershed project proposals with an **implementation focus** are encouraged to notify the Vermont Water Quality Division of their interest to apply early on in the process. Proponents must submit their final applications (one original and two copies) to the Water Quality Division of the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation at the address shown below before the close of business on **Wednesday, November 8, 2006**. Proposals for watershed projects with an implementation focus must be nominated by the Governor of Vermont. Nominations and applications are to be submitted to EPA by Monday, November 13, 2006. The New England regional office of EPA will then evaluate and rank each

submission based on a set of published criteria. Final selections of the watershed grantees will be announced later by EPA, most likely in the late winter/spring of 2007.

Proponents interested in submitting watershed proposals having a **capacity building focus** are encouraged to notify the Vermont Water Quality Division of their interest to apply early on in process. Proponents are asked to provide a copy of their capacity building application to the Vermont Water Quality Division at the address shown below before the close of business on **Wednesday, October 11, 2006**. EPA has established Monday, October 16, 2006 as the application submittal deadline for capacity building proposals. Final selections of capacity building grantees will be announced later by EPA, most likely by the end of 2006.

Importantly, proposals of either sort that do not follow the format, content and other guidelines specified by EPA are likely to be disqualified.

To access the Federal Register Notice and other important information about the implementation element and the capacity building element of the 2006 Targeted Watershed Grants Program, including frequently asked questions and required proposal format and content, persons should go to EPA's web site: [www.epa.gov/owow/watershed/initiative](http://www.epa.gov/owow/watershed/initiative).

Persons within Vermont seeking further information about the 2006 Targeted Watersheds Grants Program can contact the Vermont Water Quality Division by dialing 802-241-3769 or by email ([rick.hopkins@state.vt.us](mailto:rick.hopkins@state.vt.us)).

Send watershed proposals by date specified above to:  
Vermont Water Quality Division, Attn: Rick Hopkins  
Building 10 North, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor  
103 South Main Street  
Waterbury, VT 05671-0408