

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
**EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY &  
ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS**  
**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

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**100 Cambridge Street Suite 900, Boston, MA 02114**



**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)**

**Document Title:**  
**FEDERAL FISCAL YEARS 2025 and 2026**  
**SECTION 319 NONPOINT SOURCE (NPS)**  
**IMPLEMENTATION GRANT PROGRAM**

**Agency Document Number:**  
**BWR-RFP-FFY2025-2026-319-GRANT CYCLE- WPP08**  
**COMMBUYS Bid #: BD-27-1045-BWR00-BWR01-132812**

**September 2, 2026**

## Table of Contents

|                                                                                                                                          |           |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| LIST OF TABLES .....                                                                                                                     | II        |
| LIST OF FIGURES.....                                                                                                                     | II        |
| <b>HIGHLIGHTS FOR FFY 2025-2026.....</b>                                                                                                 | <b>V</b>  |
| <b>SECTION 1: GRANT SUMMARY .....</b>                                                                                                    | <b>1</b>  |
| 1.1. GRANT OVERVIEW .....                                                                                                                | 1         |
| 1.2. SCOPE AND GOALS.....                                                                                                                | 1         |
| 1.3. GRANT APPLICATION DEADLINE AND CALENDAR .....                                                                                       | 2         |
| 1.4. QUESTIONS .....                                                                                                                     | 3         |
| <b>SECTION 2: ELIGIBILITY .....</b>                                                                                                      | <b>4</b>  |
| 2.1. ELIGIBILITY OF APPLICANTS .....                                                                                                     | 5         |
| 2.2. FINANCIAL AND FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS .....                                                                                            | 5         |
| 2.2.1. <i>Non-Federal Match Requirements</i> .....                                                                                       | 5         |
| 2.2.2. <i>Federal Requirements</i> .....                                                                                                 | 7         |
| 2.3. PROJECT TYPES.....                                                                                                                  | 8         |
| 2.3.1. <i>CWA s.319 Implementation Project Types</i> .....                                                                               | 8         |
| 2.3.2. <i>S.319 Implementation Project Required Elements</i> .....                                                                       | 10        |
| 2.3.3. <i>CWA s.319 Non-Implementation Project Types</i> .....                                                                           | 11        |
| 2.4. ACTIVE AND COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT.....                                                                                  | 12        |
| 2.5. LIMITATIONS OF ELIGIBILITY FOR SPECIFIC PROJECTS.....                                                                               | 12        |
| 2.5.1. <i>Proposed Work that Includes Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment</i> .....                                                  | 13        |
| 2.5.2. <i>National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (NPDES MS4) Eligibility</i> ..... | 13        |
| 2.5.3. <i>In-Lake Resource Restoration</i> .....                                                                                         | 15        |
| 2.5.4. <i>Ineligible Activities/Expenses</i> .....                                                                                       | 15        |
| 2.6. GUIDELINES FOR COMPETITIVE PROPOSALS .....                                                                                          | 15        |
| <b>SECTION 3: INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION.....</b>                                                                        | <b>19</b> |
| 3.1. ELIGIBILITY FORM .....                                                                                                              | 19        |
| 3.2. APPLICATION TRANSMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS.....                                                                                           | 19        |
| 3.3. ADDITIONAL FORMS .....                                                                                                              | 20        |
| <b>SECTION 4: SELECTION CRITERIA/EVALUATION PROCESS.....</b>                                                                             | <b>21</b> |
| 4.1. COMPLETION OF THE ELIGIBILITY FORM (10 POINTS) .....                                                                                | 21        |
| 4.2. WATERSHED-BASED PLAN, CWA S.208 OR OTHER PLAN (10 PTS) .....                                                                        | 21        |
| 4.3. PROBLEM DEFINITION (10 POINTS).....                                                                                                 | 21        |
| 4.3. STRATEGY/APPROACH (20 POINTS).....                                                                                                  | 21        |
| 4.4. PROJECT VIABILITY (15 POINTS) .....                                                                                                 | 22        |
| 4.5. PERMITTING (5 POINTS) .....                                                                                                         | 22        |
| 4.6. ACTIVE AND COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (20 POINTS) .....                                                                     | 22        |

|                                                                          |           |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| 4.7. NPS PRIORITY PROJECT (10 POINTS) .....                              | 23        |
| 4.8. APPLICANT’S TECHNICAL/PROJECT MANAGEMENT STRENGTH (15 POINTS) ..... | 23        |
| 4.9. QUALITY AND RESPONSIVENESS OF PROPOSAL (10 POINTS).....             | 23        |
| <b>SECTION 5: SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL .....</b>                            | <b>24</b> |

## List of Tables

|                   |                                                                                        |    |
|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| <b>Table 1.1.</b> | CWA s.319 grant announcement calendar and application deadlines.                       | 2  |
| <b>Table 2.1.</b> | Examples of eligible and ineligible s.319 match.                                       | 7  |
| <b>Table 2.2.</b> | Frequently asked questions about NPDES MS4 requirements.                               | 14 |
| <b>Table 2.3</b>  | Guidelines for developing competitive proposals for CWA s.319 implementation projects. | 16 |

## List of Figures

|                    |                                                                                   |    |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| <b>Figure A</b>    | Flow path for the s.319 RFP Guide.                                                | v  |
| <b>Figure B</b>    | Flow path for the s.319 RFP supplementary information.                            | vi |
| <b>Figure 2.1.</b> | CWA s.319 eligibility flow chart with (RFP page numbers for reference.            | 4  |
| <b>Figure 2.2.</b> | Match requirements for Clean Water Act (CWA) s.319 grant awards.                  | 6  |
| <b>Figure 2.3.</b> | CWA s.319 eligibility in NPDES MS4-regulated, unregulated, and mixed communities. | 14 |

## Highlights for FFY 2025-2026

- Eligibility Form
- Non-Federal Match Waiver (Section 2.2.1)
- S.319 Cost Calculator
- Build America, Buy America Requirement (Section 2.2.3)
- [2025-2029 Massachusetts NPS Management Plan](#)
- Eligible Projects (Section 2.3.1):
  - Implementation Projects to Restore Impaired Waters
  - Implementation Projects to Restore Nitrogen Impacted Coastal Waters
  - Implementation Projects to Protect Healthy Waters

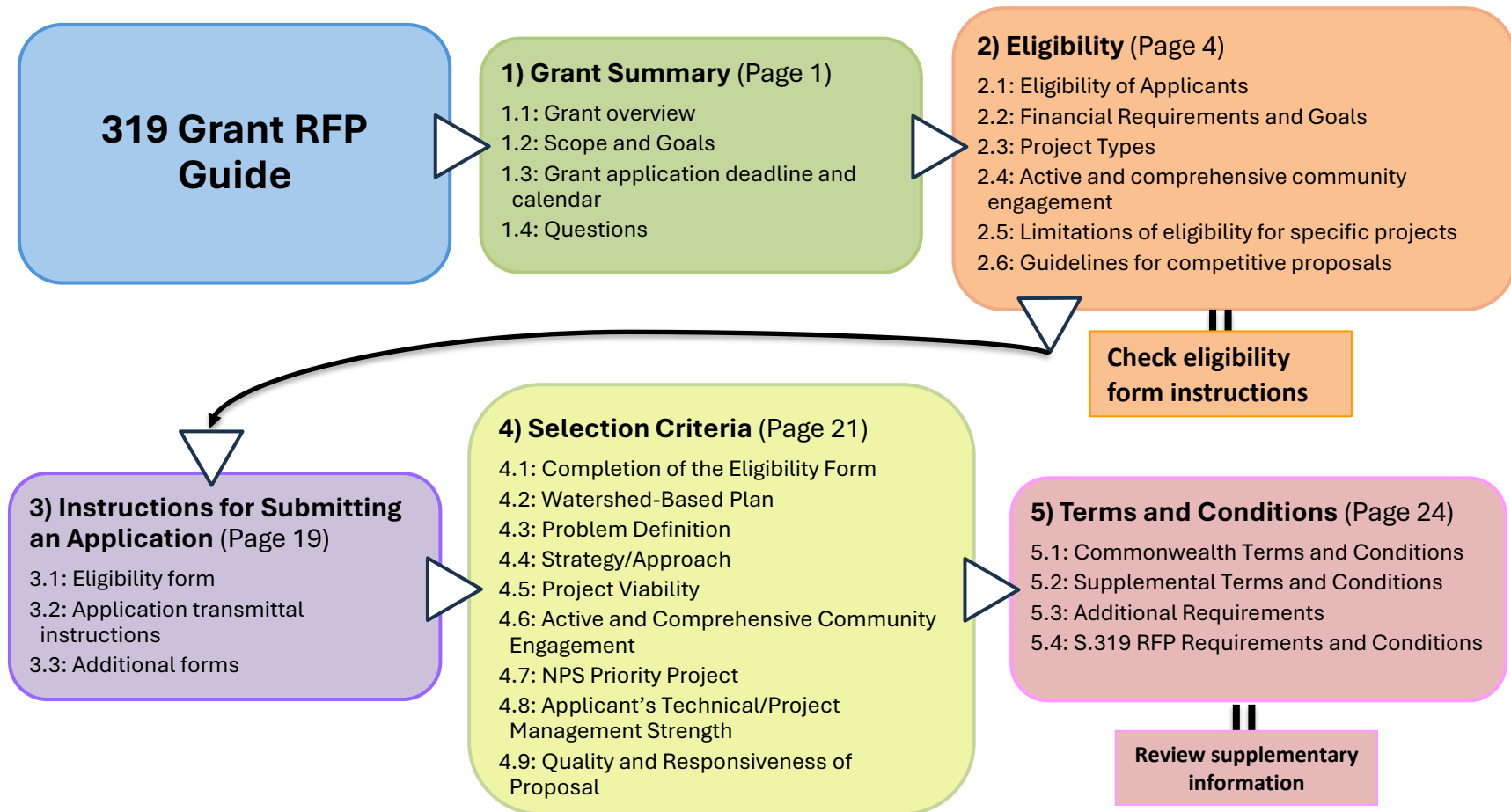


**Figure A.** Flow path for the CWA s.319 RFP guide.

## 319 Grant RFP Supplementary Information

### A) Additional Grant Contract Information (weblink)

- A1: Procurement for grant contracts
- A2: Total Anticipated Duration of Grant Contract(s)
- A3: Funding Availability, Budgeting Guidelines & Allowable Expenditures
- A4: Grant Contract Award
- A5: Applicant Communication with MassDEP and the Commonwealth
- A6: Grant Announcement Distribution Method
- A7: Prohibition of Changes to the Grant Announcement/Application
- A8: Failure to Provide a Complete and Compliant Application
- A9: Reasonable Accommodation
- A10: Selection for a Grant Award

### B) Application (Response Form) (Web link)

### C) Proposal Checklist (web link)

### D) Additional Resources and FAQs (web link)

### F) Supplemental Terms and Conditions (web link)

### G) Definitions (web link)

**Figure B.** Flow path for the CWA s.319 RFP supplementary information.

## Section 1: Grant Summary

### 1.1. Grant Overview

MassDEP announces a Request for Proposals (RFP) under the federal Clean Water Act (CWA) section 319 (s.319) Nonpoint Source (NPS) Implementation Grant program. CWA s.319 was established in 1987 as a national program to control NPS pollution, which occurs when rainfall or snowmelt moves over and through the ground, transporting and depositing natural and human-made pollutants into lakes, rivers, wetlands, coastal waters, and groundwater. The Watershed Planning Program (WPP) in the Bureau of Water Resources (BWR), Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP), awards CWA s.319 grant funding via federal funds from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for projects that address the prevention, control, and abatement of NPS pollution in the Commonwealth. These projects maintain or restore beneficial designated uses for waterbodies in accordance with the Massachusetts Surface Water Quality Standards (MA SWQS; 314 Code of Massachusetts Regulations [CMR] 4.00). Eligible projects are those that mitigate NPS impacts, provided that all CWA s.319 eligibility requirements specified in this RFP are met. Activities that implement the provisions of EPA National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) stormwater permits, including MS4 permits, and other administrative orders are not eligible for funding.

### 1.2. Scope and Goals

The goal of the CWA s.319 NPS Implementation Grant program in Massachusetts is to fund projects that target NPS pollution to restore or maintain beneficial uses as established in the MA SWQS. MassDEP anticipates that approximately \$2.5 million in federal CWA funds for federal fiscal years (FFY) 2025 and 2026 will be available for NPS implementation projects.

Projects should reflect MassDEP NPS management priorities consistent with federal [NPS Program guidelines](#) and the [2025-2029 Massachusetts Nonpoint Source Management Plan](#) (NPS Plan). Massachusetts priority focus areas for NPS pollution mitigation, as identified in the NPS Plan, are developed land, septic systems, and agriculture. Watershed-based implementation activities that address water quality impairments listed in Categories 4a, 4c, and 5 of the [Final Massachusetts Integrated List of Waters for the Clean Water Act 2022 Reporting Cycle](#) in these focus areas are the highest MassDEP NPS mitigation priority, followed by implementation projects to restore nitrogen impacted coastal waters, and the implementation of Healthy Watershed projects to protect high quality and unimpaired waters. MassDEP encourages proposals for projects across all Massachusetts watersheds.

This document summarizes the guidelines, eligibility requirements, selection criteria, and RFP solicitation schedule. Proposals that are not complete or that are not submitted according to the guidelines set forth in this RFP will be disqualified and will not be considered

for funding. Qualified proposals will be selected on a competitive basis. All applicants are cautioned that funding for this program is subject to both Commonwealth Terms and Conditions as well as the Terms and Conditions of the FFY 2025 and FFY 2026 CWA s.319 Federal Grant Awards from the EPA to MassDEP. Terms and Conditions and supplementary RFP documents can be found on the [MassDEP Grants & Financial Assistance: Watersheds & Water Quality](#) website.

### 1.3. Grant Application Deadline and Calendar

**Applications are due by Wednesday, October 28, 2026, at 4:00 p.m. (EDT).** Applicants must submit completed applications that include all required supporting materials, agree to the program conditions, and meet the eligibility requirements by the deadline stated above to be considered for a reimbursable grant award. Completed proposals must be emailed to: [Malcolm.Harper@mass.gov](mailto:Malcolm.Harper@mass.gov) and [Padmini.Das@mass.gov](mailto:Padmini.Das@mass.gov).

MassDEP anticipates that applicants will be notified in early 2027 regarding the results of the proposal review and selection process. Letters of award will be issued at this time, after which MassDEP will commence contract preparations with the selected applicants. The grant award announcement will also be posted on MassDEP's website. MassDEP reserves the right to fund a portion of a project, revise the project scope, and/or modify tasks to any project proposal. Applicants will have the option to reject the CWA s.319 grant award if a project, as revised, does not align with their capacity or organizational goals.

**Table 1.1.** CWA s.319 grant announcement calendar and application deadlines.

| EVENT                                                                                                                                                                                                       | DATE                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Pre-RFP Remote Informational Meeting (online via Zoom; details posted on MassDEP website and COMMBUYS and provided via email to those who have signed up for WPP emails focused on NPS management)          | Thursday, July 23, 2026, at 9:30 am        |
| <b>RFP Release Date (posted on MassDEP website and COMMBUYS)</b>                                                                                                                                            | <b>Wednesday, September 2, 2026</b>        |
| <b>Deadline for submission of written questions to:</b><br><a href="mailto:Malcolm.Harper@mass.gov">Malcolm.Harper@mass.gov</a> and<br><a href="mailto:Judith.Rondeau@mass.gov">Judith.Rondeau@mass.gov</a> | Wednesday, September 9, 2026, at 4:00 p.m. |
| Answers to written questions posted on MassDEP website & COMMBUYS                                                                                                                                           | Wednesday, September 16, 2026              |
| RFP Amendment Deadline. RFP documents will not be amended after this date.                                                                                                                                  | Wednesday, September 16, 2026              |

| EVENT                                                                                          | DATE                                            |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Grant Application Due Date</b>                                                              | <b>Wednesday, October 28, 2026 at 4:00 p.m.</b> |
| Additional Letters of Support (that do not involve matching funds or in-kind services) are due | Wednesday, November 4, 2026                     |
| Evaluation of Responses and Response Selection by MassDEP                                      | November 2026                                   |
| Announcement of Grant Awards (estimated)                                                       | January 2027 (estimated)                        |
| Contract Start Date (estimated)                                                                | March 2027 (estimated)                          |

#### 1.4. Questions

Anyone wishing to submit questions must do so in writing by email to the s.319 Grant Coordinator, Malcolm Harper, at [malcolm.harper@mass.gov](mailto:malcolm.harper@mass.gov) or the NPS Outreach Coordinator, Judith Rondeau, at [judith.rondeau@mass.gov](mailto:judith.rondeau@mass.gov). Questions must be received by the deadline of 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, September 9, 2026. MassDEP anticipates that answers will be posted on the [MassDEP website](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/grants-financial-assistance-watersheds-water-quality) (<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/grants-financial-assistance-watersheds-water-quality>) by Wednesday, September 16, 2026.

## Section 2: Eligibility

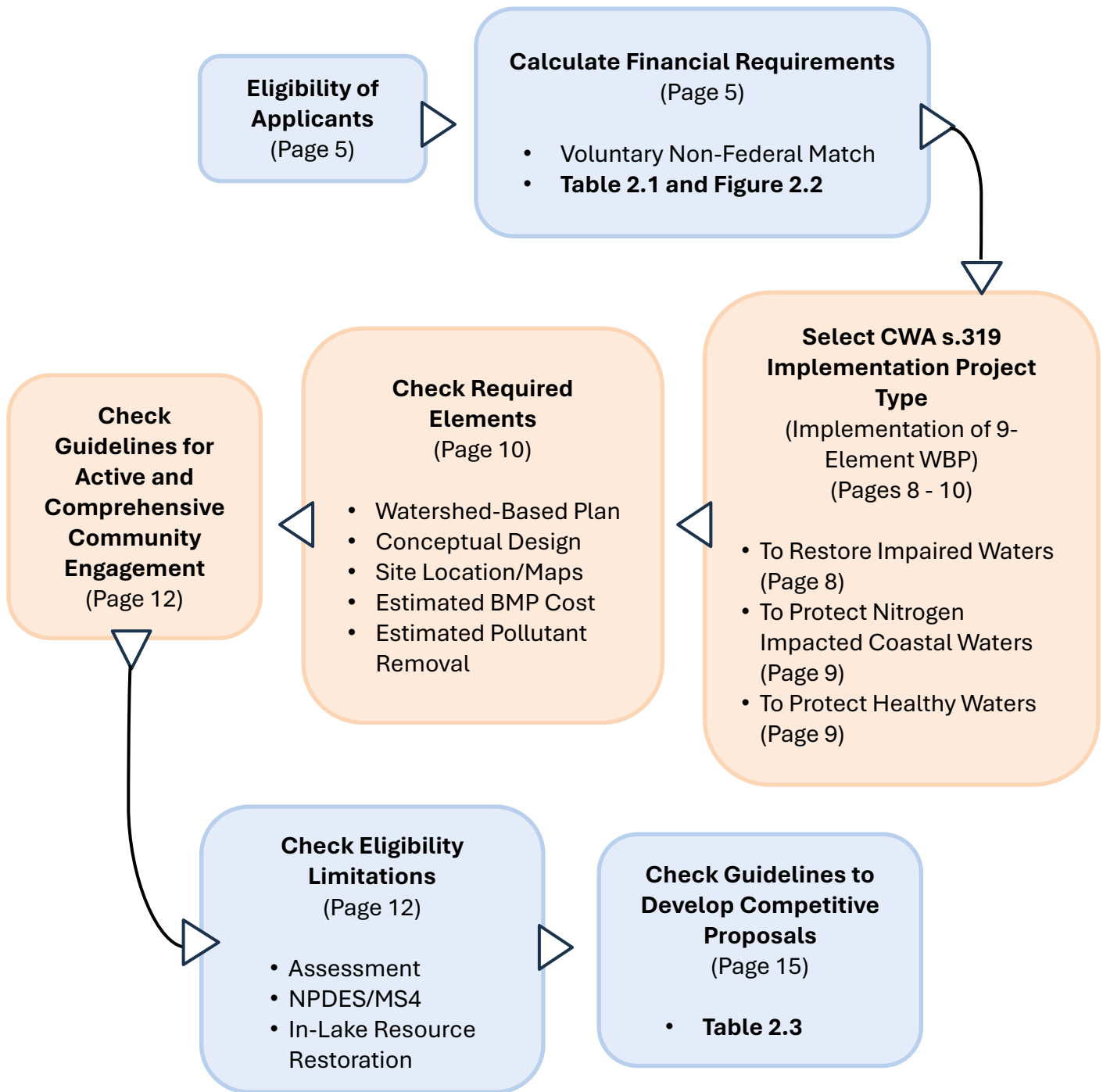


**Figure 2.1.** CWA s.319 eligibility flow path with RFP page numbers for reference. All information required to complete the [CWA s.319 Grant Eligibility Form](#) is provided in this section.

## 2.1. Eligibility of Applicants

The CWA s.319 NPS Implementation Grant program is open to any Massachusetts public or private organization. This includes state and federally recognized tribes, regional planning agencies, councils of governments, counties, conservation districts, cities and towns, other local public planning agencies, interstate agencies, and non-profit organizations.

- *Eligibility Form*: Applicants **must** complete the [CWA s.319 Grant Eligibility Form](#)
- to ensure their organization(s) and CWA s.319 grant project(s) are eligible for funding. This form provides applicants with the opportunity to review their projects and identify and correct any elements that may not be eligible for funding.
- *Multiple Applications*: An eligible applicant may submit more than one (1) proposal for distinct implementation projects.
- *Multiple Applicants*: Multiple entities may partner on a single application, but one eligible entity must be the primary applicant.
- *Subcontracting*: Applicants may propose a subcontractor or team of subcontractors as part of their application and proposal. Subcontractors working for the applicant are subject to the same terms and conditions as the applicant, as defined in this RFP. Subrecipients of a federal award (excluding states and federally recognized Tribal Nations) must follow 2 CFR §§ 200.318-200.327. Pursuant to Article 9 of the Commonwealth Terms and Conditions, MassDEP reserves the right to review and approve all subcontracts.
- *MBTA Communities Act*: The receipt of grant funds is contingent upon the grantee being able to certify that it will comply with the Massachusetts General Laws, including G.L. c. 40A, § 3A, the [MBTA Communities Act](#). Compliance with the MBTA Communities Act is determined by the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities.

## 2.2. Financial and Federal Requirements

### 2.2.1. Non-Federal Match Requirements

**A non-federal match is not required for this RFP.** Proposals under this RFP will not be required to provide a non-federal match of at least 40% of the total project cost. While the CWA (40 CFR 31.24) requires that CWA s.319 grant projects include such a match, MassDEP has gathered funds at the state level to cover this requirement for the FFY2025-2026 s.319 NPS Implementation Grant. Therefore, MassDEP will **waive the match requirement for all awardees in the FFY2025-2026 funding cycle only**. However, the voluntary inclusion of a match may provide applicants a competitive advantage in the selection process, as identified below in Section 4: Selection Criteria/Evaluation Process.

For applicants who wish to provide a non-federal match, please refer to the following guidelines:

- The 40% non-federal match applies to the *total project cost*, not only the CWA s.319 grant request. For example, for a proposed project that has a total project cost of \$100,000, the applicant may request grant funds of 60% (\$60,000) and supply the remaining 40% (\$40,000) of the total project cost as match.
- The 40% match may be provided as cash or as an in-kind contribution. In-kind services must be calculated based on the actual cost of the service provided and must be verifiable. Cost estimates for in-kind services must be reasonable and applicants must be able to provide documentation upon request. In-kind services must also be directly related to and necessary for the successful implementation of the proposed project.
- CWA s.319 funding cannot be used as a non-federal match for any other federally funded grant program or project.
- Non-federal match must meet the same CWA s.319 eligibility guidelines as grant-funded work.
- Required Documentation. Grant recipients will be required to document and report the non-federal match contribution, whether the match is comprised of cash, in-kind services, or both. Letters of commitment must be submitted with the proposal by all individuals and organizations contributing non-federal match funds or in-kind services to the project. The letters should specify the amount and type of match that has been committed, should be on the organization letterhead (as appropriate), and must be signed by an authorized signatory.
- Timeline for Match. CWA s.319-eligible project-related activities that have been accrued from October 1, 2025, to the end of the grant contract are eligible as match. For more information about non-federal match, please see [Office of Management and Budget Uniform Guidance](#) documentation.
- MassDEP has developed the [CWA s.319 Grant Project Cost Calculator](#) to assist applicants with determining the voluntary 40% non-federal match.

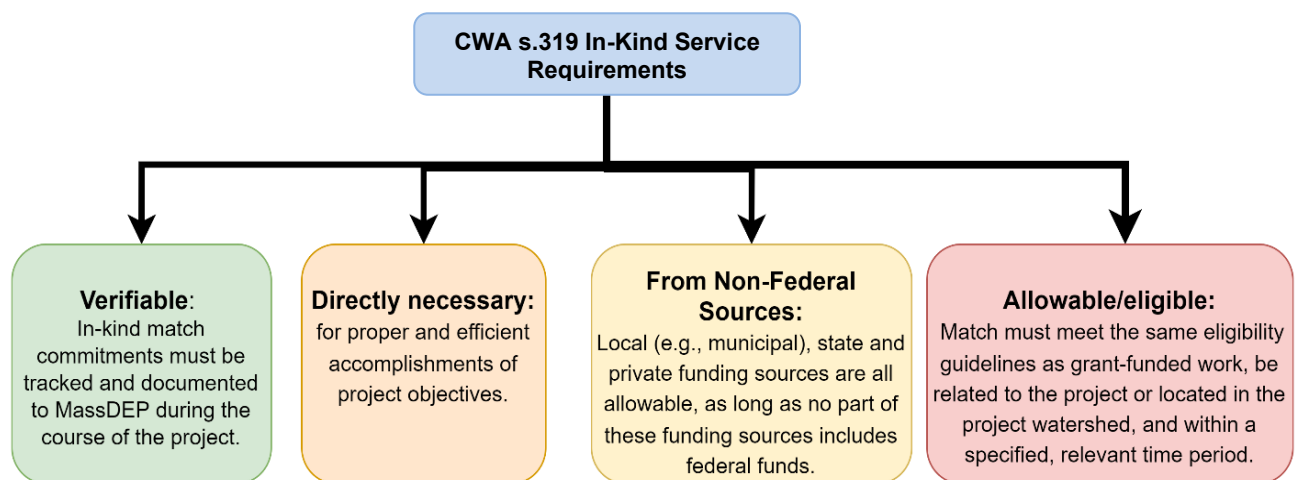


**Figure 2.2.** Match requirements for Clean Water Act (CWA) s.319 grant awards.

**Table 2.1.** *Examples of eligible and ineligible s.319 match.*

| Eligibility             | Examples of Cash or In-Kind Match                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Eligible Match</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Labor (e.g., project staff time and/or <a href="#">volunteer labor</a>)</li> <li>➤ Contribution of materials and/or equipment from project partners, including privately owned businesses (e.g., boats, backhoes, street sweepers)</li> <li>➤ Contribution of office space and/or meeting space, and use of office equipment and supplies</li> <li>➤ Other non-federal grants (local, state, and/or private grants) (e.g., Massachusetts Environmental Trust, Sustainable Watershed Management Initiative, or Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness [MVP] grants)</li> <li>➤ Non-federal State Revolving Fund (SRF) funds, Chapter 90 funds, Community Preservation Act, and direct state or town appropriations</li> <li>➤ Site work, engineering, design, and permitting</li> <li>➤ Development of a MassDEP-accepted Watershed-Based Plan (WBP)</li> <li>➤ Any other NPS mitigation work that would be considered CWA s.319-eligible and that is being conducted within the project watershed, provided:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The work is described in detail and is included as a task within the CWA s.319 project proposal</li> <li>○ Letters of commitment from match providers or cooperators are included within the CWA s.319 project proposal, and</li> <li>○ All other match guidelines are met.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
| <b>Ineligible Match</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Federal grants or funds</li> <li>➤ Preparation of this proposal and other activity related to seeking CWA s.319 funds through this grant process are not eligible as non-federal match.</li> <li>➤ NPDES permit-related work</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

### 2.2.2. Federal Requirements

#### Build America, Buy America (BABA) Requirement

As of 2022, implementation projects funded under the CWA s.319 NPS Implementation Grant Program must follow federal BABA requirements. For recipients of CWA s.319 grant funds, [EPA's website](#) explains that grantees should “to the greatest extent practicable under a Federal award, provide a preference for the purchase, acquisition, or use of goods, products, or materials produced in the United States.” Applicants and grantees must

consider their options and impacts to budget items for their proposal and project, respectively.

Projects funded under this RFP will be subject to the Buy America Sourcing requirements under the BABA requirements of the [Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act \(IIJA\)](#) (P.L. 117-58, §70911-70917). Certain limited exclusions may apply if the proposal meets either of the following conditions:

1. The restoration projects will not require any iron and steel, manufactured products, and nonferrous construction materials covered by the Act to be permanently affixed to, consumed in, or incorporated into the project, and
2. The total project proposal costs less than \$250,000 of federal grant funding.

The Buy America preference will apply to the entire project, including portions funded using non-federal funds (match). For legal definitions and sourcing requirements, consult EPA's [Build America, Buy America website](#) and the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) [Memorandum M-24-02, Implementation Guidance on Application of Buy America Preference in Federal Financial Assistance Programs for Infrastructure & Federal Register Notice](#). EPA's [Office of Water Implementation Procedures](#) provides program-specific guidance relevant to water infrastructure projects.

### **Federal Terms & Conditions**

All applicants are advised that CWA s.319 funding is subject to Federal Terms and Conditions in addition to Commonwealth Terms and Conditions. Applicants should thoroughly review the supplemental information listed in Section 5 of this document, and in particular, both Commonwealth and Federal Terms and Conditions, before submitting responses to this RFP. Terms and Conditions and supplementary RFP documents can be found on the [MassDEP Grants & Financial Assistance: Watersheds & Water Quality](#) website.

## **2.3. Project Types**

### **2.3.1. CWA s.319 Implementation Project Types**

A minimum of 50% of CWA s.319 funding will be directed to implementation projects that will directly address CWA s.303(d) listed impairments or protect healthy waters through NPS pollutant control and removal. Applicants are expected to propose a watershed-based strategy to implement structural and non-structural best management practices (BMPs) that address listed impairments and lead to the restoration of impaired waters (e.g., those waters listed in categories 4a, 4c, and 5 of the [Final Massachusetts Integrated List of Waters for the Clean Water Act 2022 Reporting Cycle](#)). A MassDEP-accepted nine-element Watershed-Based Plan (WBP) is required by the start of each implementation project before a Notice to Proceed can be issued. Contact MassDEP staff ([judith.rondeau@mass.gov](mailto:judith.rondeau@mass.gov) or [meghan.selby@mass.gov](mailto:meghan.selby@mass.gov)) if you do not know if your watershed has a MassDEP-accepted WBP or if you need guidance to develop a WBP.

**A. Implementation Projects to Restore Impaired Waters**

- Projects that propose structural and non-structural BMPs to restore or improve waters impaired due to the impacts of NPS pollution.
  - BMPs should be selected for optimal pollutant load removal, emphasizing source reduction.
  - Proposed BMPs must be developed to at least the conceptual design stage and the conceptual designs must be submitted with the proposal.
  - Proposals must contain site-specific information to demonstrate that the project is feasible and can be completed within the project timeline.
- Projects that address agricultural NPS or source water protection areas (SWPA) in National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI) watersheds will have a competitive advantage. Current NWQI watersheds: Westport River, Noquochoke Lake, Unkety Brook/James Brook (Nashua River watershed), Manhan River, and South River (in the Deerfield River Watershed).
- A MassDEP-accepted nine-element WBP to restore impaired waters is required for all implementation projects to restore impaired waters.

**B. Implementation Projects to Restore Nitrogen Impacted Coastal Waters**

- Projects must address nitrogen pollution in designated Nitrogen Impacted Coastal Waters in southeastern Massachusetts, Cape Cod, Martha's Vineyard, and Nantucket.
- Eligible project components must result in nitrogen load reductions and can include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - installation of enhanced innovative/alternative (I/A) nitrogen reducing septic systems,
  - installation of Permeable Reactive Barriers (PRBs), and/or
  - restoration of inland and coastal wetland areas.
- Nitrogen impacted areas that have an approved, or close to completed, CWA s.208 Plan or other watershed plan(s) at the regional scale will be more competitive.
- A MassDEP-accepted nine-element WBP to restore impaired waters is required by the start of each implementation project before a Notice to Proceed can be issued. Nitrogen impacted areas that have or are in the process of developing a Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan (CWMP) or Targeted Watershed Management Plan (TWMP) should update these plans to comply with the nine-element WBP format. For guidance on updating CWMPs/TWMPs to nine-element WBPs, please visit the [MassDEP WBP webpage](#) or contact Judy Rondeau ([judith.rondeau@mass.gov](mailto:judith.rondeau@mass.gov)) or Meghan Selby ([meghan.selby@mass.gov](mailto:meghan.selby@mass.gov)) for assistance.
- Connections to a centralized wastewater collection system associated with the installation or extension of a centralized wastewater collection system are

eligible for funding under the CWA s.319 grant program; however, the installation or extension of a centralized wastewater collection system is not eligible.

### C. Implementation Projects to Protect Healthy Waters

- Projects that protect unimpaired and high-quality waters from the effects of NPS pollution and mitigate the impacts of increased storm frequency and intensity.
- Projects may include, but are not limited to, fluvial geomorphology, habitat improvement, and nutrient, sediment, or pathogen reductions. Proposals may consist of funding and support for projects with a substantial land conservation component as part of NPS prevention and remediation.
- Proposals must be supported with documentation of the problem, conceptual or better plans to explain the strategy and approach, and any other information necessary to demonstrate the feasibility and effectiveness of the proposed project.
- A MassDEP-accepted nine-element WBP to restore impaired waters or [Healthy Watersheds Protection Plan](#) to protect healthy waters is required by the start of each implementation project before a Notice to Proceed can be issued.

### 2.3.2. S.319 Implementation Project Required Elements

- A. Project Details:** Applicants **must** identify the impaired water(s), including impairment and known or suspected pollutant source(s). Applicants must include a definitive description of project strategy and viability, an accurate budget for the project, an operations and maintenance plan for installed BMP(s), and a description of the environmental improvements that will result from the project. Sustainability, operation and maintenance, and cost-effectiveness are important aspects of proposal competitiveness.
- B. Nine-Element Watershed-Based Plan:** A completed, MassDEP-accepted nine-element watershed-based plan (WBP) is required by the start of each implementation project before a Notice to Proceed can be issued.
- A WBP is a document that provides a holistic framework for watershed management, detailing water quality concerns and identifying actions to address those concerns. A nine-element WBP incorporates specific elements mandated by EPA that identify water quality impairments and NPS sources and provides a framework to address those sources and evaluate plan effectiveness.
  - MassDEP's [Watershed-Based Plan Tool](#) guides users to select a watershed and complete the nine elements necessary for a WBP.
  - Additional information about WBPs can be found in the Question and Response section of this RFP, located on the [MassDEP Grants & Financial Assistance webpage](#).

- C. Conceptual Designs:** Conceptual designs, specific site location(s), and estimated cost of the BMP(s) are required as part of the Application. Conceptual designs must be of sufficient detail and include sufficient site work to allow the proposal review committee to evaluate the viability of the proposal. Conceptual designs need not be prepared by a Professional Engineer and do not need to include detailed site work. Proposals for infiltration BMPs must provide soil data to support the feasibility of the strategy.
- D. Site Location and Maps:** Proposals must include maps of the site and locus to show site characteristics and the location of each specific BMP location in sufficient detail to defend the feasibility of the BMP(s) and geopolitical and watershed location(s) of the proposed work.
- E. Estimated Costs**
- Applications must include a realistic and well-thought-out cost estimate that accounts for potential unanticipated issues. Applications should provide a sequential list of all possible steps of the project, from planning to construction. Successful grant applications typically have completed most of the technical and planning work necessary before an application is submitted. The total cost should be reasonable for the work proposed.
  - Applications must include a plan for post-construction operations and maintenance (O&M) activities that must be performed for the life of the installed BMP(s).
  - Please refer to the [Massachusetts NPS 319 Grant Guidebook](#) to determine reasonable cost estimation for the financial assistance, technical assistance, and post-construction operations and maintenance (O&M) activities.
- F. Estimated Pollutant Removal**
- Proposals must contain an appropriate method for estimating the success or the pollutant reduction results (e.g., estimate how many tons of sediment have been removed by a new rain garden). Use specific units (e.g., tons, pounds, and/or CFUs), not percentages. Estimating pollutant removal numbers may entail using a MassDEP- and EPA-approved Programmatic Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP).
  - Provide load reductions for the pollutant(s) of concern for the target waterbody. Proposed projects should reduce the target pollutant load as much as possible per dollar spent.

### 2.3.3. CWA s.319 Non-Implementation Project Types

MassDEP will not be funding non-implementation projects through the FFY 2025-2026 CWA s.319 grant. For this grant cycle, please submit proposals for non-implementation projects to the FFY 2024 CWA s.604(b) Water Quality Management Planning Grant Request for Proposals.

#### **2.4. Active and Comprehensive Community Engagement**

- MassDEP's NPS program will highly encourage robust and comprehensive community involvement through active engagement in implementation projects funded by the CWA s.319 grant program. Initiatives that will enhance and facilitate the participation of community members in the stewardship of local natural resources will be highly prioritized.
- Project costs associated with active and comprehensive engagement involving all stakeholders on the community level to take meaningful actions to address the effects of NPS pollution are eligible for program funds under this RFP.
- Proposals should include an evaluation method to determine the impact and/or effectiveness of active and comprehensive community engagement actions on the project.
- Community engagement activities should be scalable and transferable and include a deliverable that can be made available in print and electronic form. Note that electronic documents must comply with [Americans with Disabilities Act Title II](#) (ADA Title II) digital accessibility requirements. Click [here](#) to view Commonwealth Digital Accessibility Standards and Requirements.

Examples of initiatives to promote active and comprehensive community engagement include:

- Incorporation of NPS projects into school curricular and/or extracurricular activities such as environmental clubs, science exhibitions, and/or field trips.
- Activities that engage community youth.
- Partnerships with local organizations.
- Neighborhood/watershed clean-ups associated with the CWA s.319 grant project.
- Other community events associated with the CWA s.319 grant project that will result in meaningful and impactful outcomes such as increased stakeholder knowledge and understanding and neighborhood-scale adoption of BMPs.
- Community engagement via programs such as [Photo-Voice](#).
- Information sharing through stakeholders' meetings or community workshops.
- Site tours with community members.
- Community-Based Social Marketing (CBSM) campaigns

#### **2.5. Limitations of Eligibility for Specific Projects**

### 2.5.1. Proposed Work that Includes Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment

**Eligible:** Water quality monitoring and assessment is eligible *only if*:

- it is a project component to support Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) development,
- the assessment is a recommendation of a TMDL analysis, or
- it is a required element of a restoration activity, such as the application of chemicals for in-lake restoration.

**\*\*Note that a project-specific QAPP is mandatory for such assessment work.\*\***

**Ineligible:** A project that proposes activity such as water quality and/or biological monitoring for assessment purposes alone:

- with no significant implementation component, and/or
- with no link to a TMDL.

### 2.5.2. National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (NPDES MS4) Eligibility

**Communities that are not MS4-Regulated or Unregulated Portions of Partially Regulated Communities:**

CWA s.319 projects are fully eligible for funding in communities that are not subject to MS4 regulations (unregulated communities) and in unregulated portions of partially regulated (mixed) communities. CWA s.319 Implementation funding may be used to fund projects in MS4-regulated areas as long as the funds are not used for work that is required by the current NPDES MS4 permit.

**Example:** Massachusetts's 2016 NPDES MS4 permit is currently in effect. The 2016 permit requires regulated entities to develop or enhance Stormwater Management Plans (SWMP). CWA s.319-supported work will remain eligible in regulated areas unless or until the work becomes required by the permit or the SWMP. Suppose the SWMP outlines a strategy of progressive housekeeping, and implementation activities will require a BMP at the end of a five-year timeline. In that case, the BMP is eligible for CWA s.319 funds until the start date of the upcoming MS4 permit, when the work becomes required.

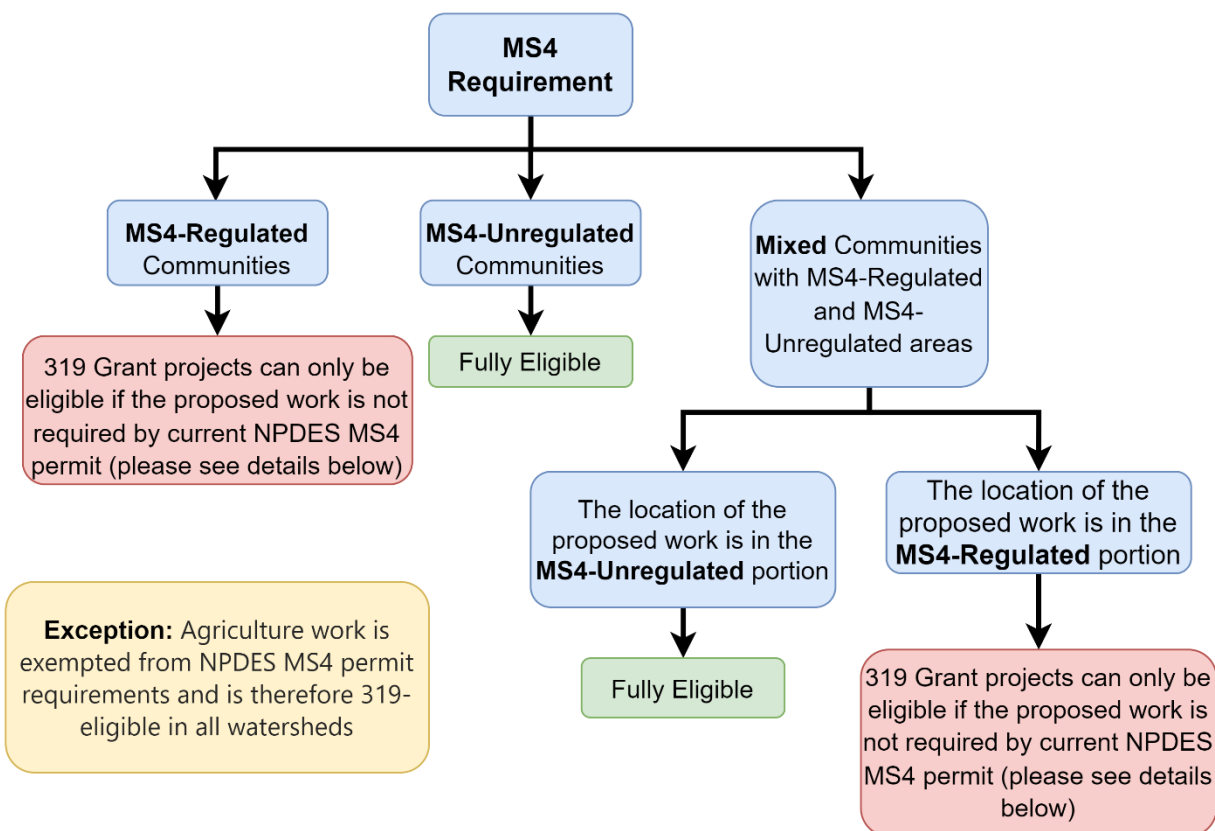


**Figure 2.3.** CWA s.319 eligibility in NPDES MS4-regulated, unregulated, and mixed communities. See [Town-by-town maps of MS4-Regulated vs. MS4-Unregulated areas](#) to determine if a proposed project is in an MS4 area.

**Table 2.2.** Frequently asked questions about NPDES MS4 requirements.

| Question                                                                                                              | Answer                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Is mapping work in an MS4-regulated area eligible?                                                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Mapping stormwater systems and/or outfalls in an MS4 area is required as part of the MS4 permit and is, therefore, <b>not eligible</b>.</li> <li>➤ Mapping a river corridor in an MS4 area as part of a protection proposal would be <b>eligible</b>, provided the MS4 permit does not require it.</li> </ul> |
| Is the groundwork for bylaw development to help meet MS4 permit requirements eligible as a match for CWA s.319 funds? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>No.</b> Work that addresses the requirements of the MS4 permit is not CWA s.319-eligible.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Is agricultural work in an MS4-regulated area eligible?                                                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Yes,</b> agriculture work is exempted from NPDES MS4 permit requirements and is CWA s.319-eligible in all watersheds.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                           |

### 2.5.3. In-Lake Resource Restoration

In-lake resource restoration activities are generally eligible for CWA s.319 implementation grant funding as long as certain conditions are met. For example, in-lake work under CWA s.319 can only be funded on waterbodies that have public access. See [Massachusetts Pond Maps](#) (Go Fish MA!) to determine if a lake or pond has public access. Additionally, applicants must demonstrate that all on-land watershed control measures have been exhausted before applying for in-lake measures.

#### **Eligible In-Lake Activities:**

In-lake resource restoration activities include:

- drawdowns (including necessary infrastructure and equipment),
- dredging,
- chemical applications (herbicides and chemicals for nutrient inactivation),
- water quality sampling and assessment required for chemical applications, and
- weed harvesting.

These activities are eligible only when combined with other structural and non-structural measures as part of a comprehensive management program intended to holistically restore the NPS-impacted resource.

#### **Ineligible In-Lake Activities:**

In-lake and watershed-area work for a privately owned lake are, in most cases, ineligible.

### 2.5.4. Ineligible Activities/Expenses

- Expenses for extensive training, or the purchase of software, computers, construction equipment, vehicles, and other capital expenditures are not eligible for reimbursement.
- Grant funds cannot be used to provide meals, snacks, or other refreshments for project activities.
- Projects that would be undertaken to comply with local, State, or Federal governmental enforcement actions, such as Administrative Orders or Consent Orders.

### 2.6. Guidelines for Competitive Proposals

The evaluation of each proposal is based on the quality, completeness, and clarity of the response. In addition to the mandatory requirements in Sections 2.1 and 2.2, applications will be evaluated using the criteria outlined in [Section 4. Selection Criteria/Evaluation Process](#). The elements outlined below in Table 2.3 are intended to aid applicants in developing competitive proposals.

**Table 2.3.** Guidelines for developing competitive proposals for CWA s.319 implementation projects.

| Element                                               | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|-------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| NPS Program Goals                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Proposals should clearly demonstrate that the project will advance the goals of MassDEP’s NPS program and meet one or more objectives of the 2025-2029 <a href="#">Massachusetts Nonpoint Source Management Plan</a>.</li> <li>➤ Applications should propose a watershed-based strategy to implement a combination of structural and non-structural BMPs to address water quality impairments that will lead to the restoration of impaired waters (i.e., those waters listed in categories 4a, 4c, and 5 of the <a href="#">Final Massachusetts Integrated List of Waters for the Clean Water Act 2022 Reporting Cycle</a>) or protect healthy waters from degradation.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Problem Definition/<br>Project Approach               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Implementation projects must be based on recommendations in a MassDEP-accepted nine-element WBP.</li> <li>➤ Projects should identify the target waterbody and impairment (or water quality concern, if not impaired) and thoroughly describe the water quality concern.</li> <li>➤ The project should propose comprehensive solutions such as the implementation of structural and non-structural BMPs and source reduction practices that effectively address major identified nonpoint sources affecting water quality in the target watershed.</li> <li>➤ Structural BMPs should incorporate the use of low-impact development (LID) and/or Nature-based Solution (NBS) principles wherever feasible.</li> <li>➤ Projects that build upon previous CWA s.319-funded work and/or work initiated through a CWA s.604(b) Water Quality Management Planning grant, Coastal Zone Management (CZM), Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP), Department of Fish &amp; Game Division of Ecological Restoration (DER), Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS), Southeast New England Program (SNEP), MassBays, or other program grants will be more competitive.</li> </ul> |
| Feasibility (Permits, Timeline, Access) and Viability | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The most competitive proposals will address all feasibility questions by providing good detail and sufficient information to show that the project can go forward if funded. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ If wetlands or other resource areas are nearby, discuss how the permitting process will be undertaken and provide the potential timeline. Applicants should also</li> </ul> </li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |

| Element                                     | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                             | <p>identify and discuss timelines for all other local, state, and federal permits that may be required.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Applicants must state whether the applicant owns or controls the site property. If an applicant does not own or control the project site, then the proposal should include the property owner's agreement to allow access to the project's construction, operation, and/or maintenance, as applicable.</li> <li>➤ Applicants should demonstrate that the proposed activity is viable and will result in the intended beneficial outcome.</li> <li>➤ The applicant will demonstrate that the project is of manageable scope and size to allow completion within the grant timeframe.</li> </ul> |
| Pollutant Load Reductions                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Applicants should provide thorough but concise information demonstrating the project's effectiveness: demonstrate that the project will result in the reduction of pollutant loads that will lead to the attainment of water quality standards and efficiently expend grant funds (i.e., demonstrate high pollutant load removal per funds expended).</li> <li>➤ Grantees must quantify pollutant removal achieved by the project.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Active & Comprehensive Community Engagement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Projects should illustrate a robust and comprehensive community outreach and education component that will provide opportunities to engage the community and engender environmental stewardship meaningfully.</li> <li>➤ Proposals containing innovative ideas to promote active and comprehensive community engagement will be more competitive.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Watershed-based Projects                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Projects should be of manageable size. The most competitive projects will propose comprehensive solutions such as the implementation of BMPs and source reduction practices that effectively address major identified nonpoint sources affecting water quality in the project watershed.</li> <li>➤ The use of the <a href="#">Massachusetts Watershed-Based Plan Tool</a> is encouraged for identifying watershed boundaries and resources.</li> <li>➤ Structural BMPs should incorporate the use of low-impact development (LID) principles wherever feasible.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                |

| Element                                 | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Report Pollutant Reductions             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Grantees must quantify pollutant removal achieved by the project.</li> <li>➤</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Feasibility (Permits, Timeline, Access) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The most competitive proposals answer all feasibility questions at the proposal stage by providing good detail and sufficient information to show that the project can go forward if funded. For example:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ If wetlands or other resource areas are nearby, discuss how the permitting process will be undertaken and the potential timeline.</li> <li>▪ Applicants should also identify and discuss timelines for all other local, state, and federal permits that may be required.</li> <li>▪ Applicants must state whether the applicant owns or controls the site property.</li> <li>▪ If an applicant does not own or control the project site, the proposal should include the property owner's agreement to allow access to the project's construction, operation, and/or maintenance, as applicable.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |

## Section 3: Instructions for Submitting an Application

### 3.1. Eligibility Form

Applicants **must** complete the [online eligibility form](#) to check the eligibility of your project's proposed work. [Section 2 \(Eligibility\)](#) provides all required information to complete this form.

### 3.2. Application Transmittal Instructions

**Applications are due by Wednesday, October 28, 2026, at 4:00 p.m. (EDT).** Applicants must submit completed application packages that include the eligibility form, the CWA s.319 Response Form (Attachment B), and required supporting materials (see Attachment C) by the deadline stated above to be considered for a reimbursable grant award. Electronic application packages, in both Word and PDF, should comprise no more than 10 MB of data. **Please note that only electronic submissions will be accepted.**

**E-mail the application package (including supporting materials) to the CWA s.319 Grant contact ([Malcolm.Harper@mass.gov](mailto:Malcolm.Harper@mass.gov)) and NPS Management Section Chief Dr. Padmini Das ([Padmini.Das@mass.gov](mailto:Padmini.Das@mass.gov)) with the subject line "FFY2025-2026-319-GRANT Proposal [your organization name]."**

Applications received after **4:00 p.m. (EDT) on Wednesday, October 28, 2026**, will not be accepted. Reviewers will only receive electronic copies of proposals. Therefore, applicants must ensure that the materials transmitted through email can be viewed and shared easily.

#### **Required Application Package:**

- 1) Completed and submitted [Eligibility Form](#).
- 2) One complete original proposal in the format provided in the CWA s.319 Response Form (Attachment B – Application), which includes an administrative summary, project description, scope of services, project budget, and project milestone schedule.
- 3) Proposals should consist of **no more than 12 single-sided pages** in Aptos size 12 font. The 12 single-sided pages do not include supporting materials such as required forms, letters of support, plans, maps, photos, summarized water quality data, and statements of qualification.
- 4) Required Response Attachments as detailed in Section 3.3 (below) and Attachments B and C.
- 5) An electronic copy in both Word *and* PDF format of the full proposal, limited to 10 MB, emailed by the deadline (Wednesday, October 28, 2026, no later than 4:00 P.M. EDT) to: [Malcolm.Harper@mass.gov](mailto:Malcolm.Harper@mass.gov) and [Padmini.Das@mass.gov](mailto:Padmini.Das@mass.gov).

Please note that all responses and information submitted in response to this Grant RFP are subject to the Massachusetts Public Records Law, M.G.L. c. 66, & 10, and to c. 4, & 7, cl. 26. Any statements in submitted responses that are inconsistent with these statutes, including marking of information as confidential, shall be disregarded. Please do not submit any information that the applicant may not wish to disclose publicly, such as home addresses or personal telephone numbers, social security numbers, or other similar information. MassDEP reserves the right to reject any and all proposals or request additional information if needed.

### 3.3. Additional Forms

If selected for a grant award, the applicant will be required to submit the following forms to complete the contracting process:

- [Contractor Authorized Signatory Listing Form](#)
- Commonwealth Standard Contract Form, filled out and signed by the applicant
- Please provide the most up-to-date Commonwealth W-9 tax information form (Revised April 2022), completely filled out and signed by the applicant, that includes Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN), DUNS Number, and Unique Entity ID (SAM) number, signed by the applicant's authorized signatory.
- [Electronic Funds Transfer \(EFT\) form](#)

Applicants are encouraged to review these forms prior to submission of an application. The Commonwealth Forms are located on the [Massachusetts Comptroller's website](#).

## Section 4: Selection Criteria/Evaluation Process

Applicants must submit a completed application that includes all the required supporting materials, agree to the program conditions, and meet the eligibility requirements in order to be considered for a grant award. Eligible proposals will be competitively evaluated by an inter- and intra-agency review committee and recommended to the EPA for grant funding. The review committee reserves the right to reject any or all proposals.

The review committee will evaluate and score the grant applications from Eligible Applicants (as defined previously in this Grant Opportunity) based on the quality, completeness, and clarity of the response. The maximum number of points an application may receive is 125. The evaluation criteria for Implementation projects include, but are not limited to, the following:

### 4.1. Completion of the Eligibility Form (10 points)

- Has the applicant completed the [eligibility form](#) and confirmed the CWA s.319 eligibility of their proposed work?

### 4.2. Watershed-Based Plan, CWA s.208 or Other Plan (10 pts)

- Has MassDEP accepted a nine-element WBP for the target watershed?
- Does the project implement a recommendation of a MassDEP-accepted nine-element WBP?
- If the project is in a Nitrogen Impacted Coastal Water area, does it have a CWMP, TWMP, watershed permit, or other regional-scale watershed plan that has been or is in the process of being updated to a nine-element WBP?

### 4.3. Problem Definition (10 points)

- Has the applicant clearly and concisely described the problem?
- Is the proposal consistent with the goals and requirements of the Massachusetts NPS Management Plan?
- Does the applicant clearly understand the nature and severity of the problem?
- Does the proposal provide adequate data to support the description/analysis of the problem?
- Does the project address a category 4a, 4c, or 5 waterbody or TMDL implementation?
- Does the project address a priority focus category (developed land, septic systems, agriculture) as identified in the Massachusetts NPS Management Plan?

### 4.3. Strategy/Approach (20 points)

- Is the approach or strategy logical and properly sequenced?
- Have all necessary elements been incorporated into the proposal strategy and description, including estimated load reductions associated with the proposed BMPs?
- Are the problems, goals, strategy, tasks/deliverables consistent?

- Is the proposed strategy appropriate or suitable to accomplish the goals of the proposal?
- Does the proposed strategy result in substantial estimated pollutant load reductions?
- Is the approach or strategy cost-effective?
- Does the project consider the impacts of increased storm frequency and intensity on the strategy/approach?
- Does the proposal build on other grant projects, programs, or regional efforts?
- Will the project result in the delisting of a waterbody, pursuant to CWA s.303(d), or restoration of beneficial uses?

#### **4.4. Project Viability (15 points)**

- Is the project based on sound practice or proven innovative technology?
- Has adequate research or preparation been done to assess project feasibility?
- Are there any apparent community/public relations issues?
- Is the project subject to NPDES or other permits or consent orders, and have permitting issues been considered and addressed?
- Has the grantee addressed site property access issues where implementation work will occur?
- If this is a lakes project, is there public access to the waterbody?
- Does the project demonstrate strong stakeholder support?
- Are operations and maintenance requirements addressed in the proposal?

#### **4.5. Permitting (5 points)**

- Have required permits been acquired?
- Have permitting issues, including permitting timelines, been considered and addressed?

#### **4.6. Active and Comprehensive Community Engagement (20 points)**

- Has the proposal included a plan to involve the community through active and comprehensive engagement?

For example:

- Incorporating NPS projects into school curricular and/or extracurricular activities such as environmental clubs, science exhibitions, and/or field trips
- Activities that engage community youth
- Partnerships with local organizations
- Neighborhood/watershed clean-ups associated with the CWA s.319 grant project
- Other community events associated with the CWA s.319 grant project that will result in meaningful and impactful outcomes such as increased stakeholder knowledge and understanding and neighborhood-scale adoption of BMPs.
- Community engagement via programs such as Photo-Voice

- Information sharing through stakeholders' meetings or community workshops
  - Site tours with community members
- Does the proposal illustrate how this project would facilitate the participation of all community members?  
For example:
  - Does the proposal include a plan to translate project materials and signage into the community's relevant languages?
  - Do you plan to have language interpreters at meetings?
  - Do you plan to provide accommodation for community members with disabilities?

#### **4.7. NPS Priority Project (10 points)**

- Does the project address an NPS focus area (as identified in the 2025-2029 NPS Management Plan)?
- Does the project implement BMPs in an NWQI watershed?
- Does the project implement BMPs in a Nitrogen Impacted Coastal Water?
- Does the project implement work generated by the Regional NPS or Agricultural Coordinator Initiatives?

#### **4.8. Applicant's Technical/Project Management Strength (15 points)**

- Is the applicant qualified to manage the project?
- Are there any current or prior performance issues with this applicant or their subcontractor(s)?
- Have qualified staff or appropriate subcontractors been identified?

#### **4.9. Quality and Responsiveness of Proposal (10 points)**

- Has the proposal been formatted as requested?
- Have all requested materials been submitted?
- Are the budget and timeline reasonable for the work proposed?
- Has the source and amount of the non-federal match been clearly described within the tasks and budget as well as within the project description? **Note:** Non-federal match is not required for this RFP; however, providing match may increase a proposal's competitiveness.

## Section 5: Supplemental Material

The following supplemental material can be found on the [MassDEP Grants & Financial Assistance: Watersheds & Water Quality](#) website:

- A. Application (Response Form)
- B. Proposal Checklist
- C. Procurement and Grant Contract Information
- D. Terms and Conditions of Grant Contract Award
- E. Supplemental Terms and Conditions
- F. Federal Terms and Conditions
- G. Good Faith Efforts
- H. Additional Resources and FAQs
- I. Definitions