

RIVERS PROGRAM

This document provides information for the Rivers Program, whose primary focus is protecting and enhancing the conservation or recreational value of Pennsylvania's waterways. Although the program name emphasizes rivers work, it can support initiatives that benefit rivers, streams, creeks, lakes, ponds, wetlands and other significant water resources.

BRC's Rivers Program provides funding for a variety of activities categorized as acquisition, planning, development, and partnerships. Applicants use one of these four grant categories within the DCNR grants online portal to apply for project funding and, when prompted, indicate that their project is river-related.

The Rivers grant program is open to non-profit and municipal entities. However, non-profit organizations are encouraged to partner with a municipal entity to develop and execute this type of project as some of our funding opportunities are only available to municipal entities. If you need assistance identifying or developing these partnerships, please contact your BRC regional advisor.

Please reference the ready-to-go checklist for the appropriate grant category –acquisition, planning, development or partnerships—to identify application requirements.

Project Types

Rivers Acquisition

Land acquisition projects can take many forms; one of which are acquisitions for the purpose of Rivers Conservation. These projects promote waterway conservation by acquiring an area of land and/or water within river segments or watersheds. Projects should be listed on the Pennsylvania Rivers Conservation Registry or recommended in an approved Rivers Conservation Plan. For more details about land acquisition projects, and related requirements and conditions of funding, please see the Land Acquisition section of the grant manual.

SAMPLE PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Payment toward the acquisition of approximately 295 acres between State Route 2013 and the Susquehanna River, Ransom Borough, Lackawanna County for riparian habitat protection and passive recreation.

Rivers Planning

Planning projects generally entail the use of specialized consultants and expert professionals to develop a planning study report. The Bureau requires that the planning project or process includes substantial public participation, and that project consultants are selected using a competitive request for proposal (RFP) process. Municipalities and non-profit organizations are encouraged to work together to form partnerships to develop regional plans, and to work with local governments to integrate new plan findings and recommendations into existing comprehensive plans and planning policy documents.

The most common Rivers program planning project types are Rivers Conservation plans and Master Site Development plans. A detailed description of these project types are included below. For more details about planning projects, and related requirements and conditions of funding, please see the Planning section of the grant manual.

Master Site Development Plan (MSDP)

A site-specific project that includes research, public input and an analysis process that leads to a size, type and location plan for the full development or redevelopment of an aquatic conservation or recreational-use site. The plan must meet all current standards and provide for the identified recreation and conservation priorities of the community to the maximum extent possible.

SAMPLE PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Prepare a Master Site Development Plan for a public access to the Susquehanna River at Apollo County Park in Chanceford Township, York County. Work to include a written, bound report.

Rivers Conservation Plan

A comprehensive watershed or river corridor-based study requiring an inventory of existing natural, recreational and cultural resources, analysis of the issues, concerns and threats to river resources and values and specific recommendations that set forth priorities and actions. These studies lead to the development of a long-term watershed or river corridor management program. River Conservation studies are multi-community in scope and often undertaken in cooperation with non-profit organizations. The planning process includes substantial citizen involvement and identifies key organizations and individuals that can assist in the establishment of a watershed or river corridor plan.

SAMPLE PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS:

Prepare a Watershed Conservation Plan for the Saucon Creek Watershed from the headwaters to its confluence with the Lehigh River in Bucks, Lehigh and Northampton counties. Work to include a written, bound report.

Develop a Rivers Conservation Plan for the Sugar Creek and Towanda Creek Watersheds in Bradford, Tioga and Sullivan counties. Work to include a written, bound report.

Rivers Development

These projects involve physical improvements to waterways that restore and enhance the cultural, ecological and recreational aspects of the resource. Eligible projects include those that implement river conservation plan recommendations, enhance water trails, expand public access to aquatic resources, or increase awareness of Pennsylvania's river systems. For example, boat launches, fishing piers, riparian buffer restoration etc. For more details about development projects, and related requirements and conditions of funding, please see the Development section of the grant manual.

SAMPLE PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Development of Hough Park, Hamburg Borough in Berks County. Work to include the construction of a fishing pier and boat ramp; stabilization of stream bank restoration; ADA access; landscaping; project sign and other related site amenities.

Rivers Partnerships

Partnerships projects are collaborative statewide or regional projects that convene, educate, or train partners; build capacity; undertake special purpose studies or implementation projects; or offer mini-grants to grassroots partner organizations. Partnerships projects help build local, county, regional and statewide capacity to better develop and manage natural, recreational, or heritage resources through plan implementation. Examples of partnership projects that directly relate to water recreation and/or conservation are: management of a state designated water trail, development of a mini-grant program that provides funding to local watershed groups to implement action steps from local rivers conservation plans, provision of training related to aquatic recreation, etc. For more details about the variety of Partnership project types, and related requirements and conditions of funding, please see the Partnerships section of the grant manual.

SAMPLE PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Provide technical assistance to water trail managers; assist in the development of water trail mapping, maintenance, and improvement projects; fund and coordinate water trail partnership meetings and activities; and continue the development of PA water trails partnership website and public outreach initiatives. Work to include a written program report.

Helpful Documents for Rivers Projects

The following documents should be helpful in developing your Grant Application:

BRC Rivers Program webpage: <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc/conservation/rivers/index.htm>

Rivers Registry: <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc/conservation/rivers/riversregistry/index.htm>

Planning: <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc/elibrary/forms/planningforms/index.htm>

Development: <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc/elibrary/forms/developmentforms/index.htm>

Partnerships: <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc/elibrary/forms/partnershipforms/index.htm>

Bureau Policies: <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc/grants/grantpolicies/index.htm>

Green and Sustainable Design Resources:

<http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc/grants/greening/greenresources/index.htm>