



October 2024

Wood-Pawcatuck Wild and Scenic Rivers Stewardship Council Community Grant Proposal Process

Background

The Dingell Act, signed into US law in March of 2019, designated the Wood-Pawcatuck watershed as part of the prestigious National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. This designation represents national recognition that the seven major rivers, as well as countless lakes, wetlands, and smaller streams within the watershed, have outstanding natural, cultural, and recreational values and should be protected and preserved for the enjoyment of present and future generations. The Wild & Scenic Rivers Stewardship Council (Stewardship Council) is made up of 2 Representatives from each of the 12 Rhode Island and Connecticut watershed towns, plus allied governmental and non-profit organizations. The Stewardship Council implements its Stewardship Plan for the watershed through voluntary action, public education, and offering technical and financial support to communities, nonprofits, tribal nations, and states. Funding for this Grant Program is provided by the U.S. National Park Service and administered by the Stewardship Council.

Wild and Scenic Community Grants

The Stewardship Council is seeking grant applications for projects that protect or enhance the watershed's outstandingly remarkable values and promote stewardship of the watershed.

Who may apply:

- Non-profit organizations; local, state, and regional governmental agencies and commissions; Tribal and First Nations; public schools and other educational institutions. All other groups, individuals and businesses interested in applying for funding should partner with an eligible entity.
- Grant proposals must involve activities located in at least one town within the Wood-Pawcatuck watershed.
 - In RI: Charlestown, Exeter, Hopkinton, North Kingstown, Richmond, South Kingstown, Westerly, West Greenwich.
 - In CT: North Stonington, Sterling, Stonington, Voluntown
- Grant funds are not eligible as a match for other federal grant programs.

Application and grant details

- Applications will be accepted from October 1, 2024 through December 29, 2024.
- Grants up to \$4,00 are available.
- Applications will be acknowledged via email within 5 business days of receipt.
- Applicants will be notified of grant decisions via email by March 31, 2025.

- After completing a memorandum of understanding (MOA), successful applicants will receive 75% of the requested grant amount with the final 25% of the award disbursed upon completion of the final report (see below). If more than 75% of the award is needed initially, the applicant must provide a detailed justification.
- Applications should be submitted via email to Casey Merkle, Wild and Scenic Rivers Coordinator (coordinator@WPWildRivers.org).

Resources to Assist with Grant Ideas and Application

- Possible project topics include but are not limited to the following:
 - Programs and initiatives that highlight the outstandingly remarkable values of the watershed as documented in the Dingell Act:
 - Hydrology/Geology
 - Exceptional Ecosystems
 - Cultural
 - Scenic/Recreation
 - Land preservation activities related to the acquisition and management of preserved lands
 - Invasive species management
 - Encouraging an awareness and appreciation of river resources and values
 - Planning and managing for climate resiliency
 - Managing water runoff and improving water quality
- The Stewardship Plan contains detailed information regarding each of the 7 major rivers in the watershed – www.WPWildRivers.org
- Chapter 6 of the Stewardship Plan is important to review. This section provides specific actions that can be used to generate ideas for grant proposals
<https://WPWildRivers.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/WandSStewardshipPlan-CH-6.pdf>
- Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Flood Resiliency Management Plan, Appendix F: Town Summary Sheets provide recommended actions for improving flood resiliency in each of the 12 towns in the watershed. These recommended actions can be used to generate ideas for grant proposals.
<https://wpwa.org/documents/Flood%20Plan/Appendix%20F%20-%20Town%20Summary%20Sheets.pdf>

If you have a question about your eligibility or need assistance filling out the application, please email Casey Merkle, Wild and Scenic Rivers Coordinator (coordinator@WPWildRivers.org)

Please note: Submittal of a proposal does not guarantee funding

Restrictions and Other Details

- Grant proposals will not be accepted for review if any of the conditions below apply:
 - Proposed activities are not located within at least one of the 12 towns of the Wood-Pawcatuck watershed;
 - Required permits for proposed deliverables have not been obtained prior to submission of the grant proposal;
 - Application is not complete;
 - Grant request is for more than the maximum grant amount (currently \$4,000)
 - The application is received after December 29, 2024.
- Funding may not be used for federally-mandated activities or to address violation enforcement requirements or mitigation. Funding may also not be used for entertainment, lobbying, illegal activities or any other restrictions associated with federal fund use.
- Proposed deliverables that are mandated as part of a regulatory requirement are not eligible. This may include mitigation for enforcement actions and/or permit requirements.
- If the grant proposal is one where human health or safety is a concern, the applicant may be required to provide proof of insurance.
- To combat the spread of invasive species, all equipment used in projects must be free of plant material and soil before entering the work area. Similarly, all material used (i.e., straw mulch, gravel) and any materials disposed of (i.e., soil) must also be clean.

Reporting Requirements

The final report must contain:

- a brief description of the funded activities (including title, purpose, outcome);
- a description of the budgeted funds and how they were spent with appended receipts;
- copies of any products (photos, maps, reports, digital and metadata, etc.);
- 2-3+ photographs or videos documenting grant activities
- other requirements as agreed to in the individual MOA