



Clean Water Montgomery Grant Program

FY27 Request for Proposals

Chesapeake Bay Trust 📍 108 Severn Avenue, Annapolis, MD 21403 ➡ www.cbtrust.org



At A Glance

Program Summary:

The Clean Water Montgomery Grant Program is designed to support on-the-ground restoration as well as outreach and stewardship activities that reduce stormflow and pollutants and engage Montgomery County residents in the restoration and protection of the local rivers and streams of Montgomery County.

Deadline:

11/13/2026, at 4 pm EST

Pre-Application Site Visit Deadline:

10/16/2026. Applicants are highly encouraged to schedule a site visit before applying for Track 2: Community Restoration projects. To schedule a site visit, contact the Trust.

Eligible Project Locations:

This program funds projects throughout Montgomery County, outside the municipalities of Gaithersburg, Rockville, and Takoma Park.

Request Amounts are generally:

1. Public Outreach and Stewardship projects at \$40,000 for knowledge building projects, \$60,000 for behavior change projects
2. Community Based Restoration projects at \$100,000
3. Water Quality Monitoring projects at \$75,000
4. Litter Reduction in the Anacostia River Watershed projects at \$50,000

Submit Your Application:

Follow the instructions online at <https://cbtrust.org/grants/cleanwatermontgomery/>

Contact:

Megan Andreasen, Senior Program Officer at 410-974-2941 ext. 133 and mandreasen@cbtrust.org

This Request for Proposals was released on 8/18/2026.

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1. Introduction and Program Goals

The Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection (MCDEP) and the Chesapeake Bay Trust (the Trust) announce a grant program to support watershed restoration and outreach projects and programs throughout Montgomery County, funded through the Water Quality Protection Charge (<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/departments-environmental-protection/water/clean-water-montgomery/water-quality-protection-charge>).

This funding opportunity aims to:

1. Engage residents in achieving water quality improvement through increased awareness and quantifiable behavior change;
2. Reduce stormwater runoff and improve local water quality on property owned by non-profit organizations such as faith-based organizations, community associations, community pools, private schools, or other types of non-profit entities;
3. Expand community-based water quality monitoring capacity in the County; and
4. Reduce litter in the Anacostia River Watershed through litter reduction-focused stewardship programs.

MCDEP and the Trust are committed to empowering all people to participate in the restoration and protection of our region's natural resources through this program. As a result, the program strongly encourages applications directly from or that engage communities underrepresented in the environmental space. For more about the Trust's commitment to engage underrepresented groups, see our strategic plan at www.cbtrust.org/strategic-plan and <https://cbtrust.org/diversity-inclusion/>.

The Trust recognizes that application processes can be complicated and time-consuming. If you would like technical assistance/support in completing your application, please reach out to Megan Andreasen, mandreasen@cbtrust.org; (410)974-2941 x133, for assistance. Applicants are strongly encouraged to contact Trust staff to discuss applications *at least* two weeks prior to the deadline. The Trust cannot guarantee availability of project development assistance within two weeks of the deadline.

2. Eligible Applicants and Project Locations

MCDEP and the Trust welcome requests from the following non-profit organizations:

- Watershed/environmental organizations
- Faith-based organizations
- Service, youth, and civic groups
- Community associations
- Private schools (public school sustainable efforts are supported through the School Energy and Recycling Team Program:
<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/facilities/greenschoolsfocus/index.aspx>)

This is not an exhaustive list of eligible applicants; however, applicants **must have a current tax-exempt 501(c)3 status**. If your organization does not have a current 501(c)3 status, a fiscal sponsor may apply and secure funds on your behalf. For more information about fiscal sponsorships, reach out to the Trust. If your organization category is not listed above, contact the Trust to verify eligibility.

Projects must be implemented in Montgomery County, Maryland. Projects located in the municipalities of Gaithersburg, Rockville, and Takoma Park are not eligible for funding in this program. However, projects in these

areas are eligible in the Outreach and Restoration Grant Program (<https://cbtrust.org/grants/outreach-and-restoration/>) and other programs through the Trust. Reach out to the Trust for more information.

Applicants not based in Montgomery County must demonstrate partnership with a Montgomery County community or have a Montgomery-based partner whose role is clearly articulated in the application and in a Letter of Commitment from that partner.

3. Priorities and Requirements for all Project Tracks

Priority Areas: Montgomery County Planning Department's Community Equity Index mapping tool (<https://community-equity-index-mncppc-mcplanning.hub.arcgis.com/>) has been vetted for use in this grant program. Projects located within *Highly Disproportionate – Disadvantaged* and *Moderately Disproportionate – Disadvantaged* areas will receive a higher ranking, as outlined in Section 9. Evaluation Criteria.

Coordination with Parks: Any project on Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) land must receive permission in advance and attest to coordination with Park staff. Projects that can occur on Park land with permission include education and outreach efforts and water quality monitoring projects. Litter reduction efforts can only occur on Park lands within the Anacostia Watershed. Grantees completing litter reduction projects can only report the litter data through MCDEP's litter collection form: <https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/8b1ca0e2d9394631bcfb792d6afc8522>. No restoration projects can occur on Park land.

Supporting Documents: All projects will be required to submit supporting documents for their project track. View the required documents and information for each project track in [Appendix A](#). If the document/information is not available at the time of application, it will be requested upon award.

4. Funding Availability and Eligible Project Tracks

The funding partners anticipate \$900,000 will be available to support projects in this grant round. The Clean Water Montgomery Grant Program supports funding requests for the following project tracks:

Project Track	Name	Funding Level
Track 1	Public Outreach and Stewardship	Up to \$40,000 for Knowledge Building, and up to \$60,000 for Behavior Change
Track 2	Community Based Restoration	Up to \$100,000
Track 3	Water Quality Monitoring	Up to \$75,000
Track 4	Litter Reduction in the Anacostia River Watershed	Up to \$50,000

Requests may exceed these levels with additional justification and prior approval by the Trust. Projects that will NOT be supported include:

- Annual giving, fundraising, and/or venture capital;
- Political lobbying;
- Reimbursement for a project that has been completed or materials that have already been purchased;
- Traditional marketing efforts that serve to generally promote the applicant organization; and/or

- Projects that are required under an existing or pending regulatory process or permit, are required for mitigation, or are required by a regulatory authority for any other reason. It is the sole responsibility of the applicant to determine if any regulatory requirements or conditions exist prior to applying for the grant.



View example projects at: <https://cbtrust.org/grants/cleanwatermontgomery/projects/>

4.1 Project Track 1 – Public Outreach and Stewardship

The Public Outreach and Stewardship track will consider projects focused on Knowledge Building or Behavior Change.

Knowledge Building projects will educate and engage residents on watershed challenges, behaviors that achieve watershed improvement, and community stewardship activities. Projects should seek to increase knowledge within a priority audience, which can be described as a clearly defined segment of the public. Knowledge should be increased on a topic in which a basic level of knowledge has not yet been established within the priority audience. Request amounts will generally be up to \$40,000.

Behavior Change projects are suitable for organizations that have completed several rounds of knowledge building with a specific audience and topic. For more guidance on behavior change proposals, see the Behavior Change Planning and Process Guidelines here: https://cbtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/Guidelines-and-Information-for-Behavior-Change-Projects_8.6.24.pdf. Request amounts will generally be up to \$60,000.

Project Track 1 Guidelines:

- Public Outreach and Stewardship projects that occur on park land must receive permission in advance, obtain permits if applicable, and commit to coordinating with M-NCPPC;
- Leverage and promote existing County programs (e.g., Tree Montgomery: <https://treemontgomery.org/>, RainScapes Rewards Rebates: <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/departments-environmental-protection/property-care/rainscapes>, etc.). View [Appendix B](#) for a list of County programs and resources;
- Align with the community engagement guidelines found in [Appendix C](#). To support a high likelihood of project success and sustainability, applicants are encouraged to build long-term relationships and partnerships to engage a priority audience rather than a "once & done" approach;
- Place the project in the context of a larger initiative that will eventually seek to influence behavior and will support the MCDEP mission and programs;
- Products cannot be used for profit during the award period or in the future by the awardee or any other entity; and
- Focus knowledge-building on the following topics:
 - Pet waste management;
 - Litter reduction with a focus on personal attitudes or barriers towards removing litter, reducing, reusing, and recycling solid waste;
 - Rain barrel and other small-scale stormwater management practice installation and use;
 - Proper use of herbicides, pesticides, fertilizers and mosquito management;
 - Using native plants and converting lawns to conservation landscapes;
 - Environmentally-conscious residential car washing, including proper water and product usage;
 - Educating community pools on proper permit requirements, maintenance and disposal of chlorinated pool water;

- Proper disposal of household hazardous waste;
- Proper management of septic systems;
- Proper disposal of fats, oils, and grease; and
- Proper use of ice control and winter salt management.

Example projects include, but are not limited to:

- Outreach to target audiences to further MCDEP’s mission and expand engagement in County programs such as the Tree Montgomery program and RainScapes Rewards Rebate program, particularly with the goal of reaching under-engaged communities;
- Community or stream cleanups (outside of the Anacostia River watershed; projects in the Anacostia River watershed should apply under Project Track 4 – Litter Reduction in the Anacostia Watershed);
- Community stormwater education workshops to train volunteers or “Train the Trainer” type programs; and
- Environmental knowledge-building events, workshops, campaigns, etc. designed to encourage small scale stormwater practice installation and maintenance. Small-scale stormwater practices include rainwater harvesting (e.g., rain barrels), rain gardens, and other green infrastructure/stormwater techniques.

4.2 Project Track 2 – Community Based Restoration

There are three types of projects that will generally be supported within Project Track 2:

- Design (conceptual and final design) – request amounts will generally be up to \$25,000
- Design and Implementation – request amounts will generally be up to \$100,000
- Implementation (final designs exist, funds only implementation) – request amounts will generally be up to \$100,000

Applicants are highly encouraged to conduct a pre-application site visit with the Trust and MCDEP prior to applying for this track. A pre-application site visit worksheet should be filled out at the site visit and submitted with the application: <https://cbtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/CWM-Pre-Application-Site-Worksheet-8.18.26.pdf>.

Preference will be given to projects that are furthest along in the assessment and design phases. All design-only applications should be ready to begin design of specific projects upon award and shall commit to planning for and demonstrating the ability to implement the completed design. Each award should lead to the eventual implementation of “in the ground” projects that improve stormwater management and reduce the flow of nitrogen, phosphorus, sediment, and other pollutants into local waterways. Additionally, implementation projects will commit to applying to Montgomery County’s Water Quality Protection Charge Credit Program at project completion, as applicable.

Project Track 2 Guidelines:

- Abide by all federal, state, and local laws and regulations and industry standards. Any remediations required resulting from noncompliance with such laws, regulations and standards will be at the sole expense of the grantee;
- Projects must be voluntary;
- Any projects that are required under an existing or pending regulatory process or permit, are required for mitigation, or are required by a regulatory authority for any other reason cannot be supported. It is the sole responsibility of the applicant to determine if any regulatory requirements or conditions exist prior to applying for the grant;
- Landowner permission is required for all projects;

- Projects will typically be less than 5,000 square feet and/or 130 cubic yards of land disturbance. Projects that are outside of these thresholds will require permits. Visit the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services for more information: <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/DPS/index.html>;
- Projects cannot be located within a right of way, easement, or floodplain. To check if your project is located within a floodplain, visit this map: <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/e518764ec03c46e2b605f2c8d46688f9>;
- A five-year detailed maintenance plan will be required. Additionally, Montgomery County shall be allowed access to the site to assess and support the function of the restoration practice in perpetuity; and
- Implementation projects funded through this grant track are not eligible for the RainScapes Rebates Program. Subsequently, the RainScapes Rebates program cannot be used as match for the same grant project.

Additional guidance and requirements for projects that include the installation of herbaceous plants, understory trees and shrubs, and permeable pavers can be found in [Appendix D](#).

Example projects include, but are not limited to:

- Bioretention cells, bioswales, and projects such as conservation landscaping, green roofs, rain harvesting techniques, rain gardens, pavement removal, permeable pavers/porous concrete, and other innovative green infrastructure stormwater techniques that measurably reduce stormwater runoff;
- Stormwater management plans and/or formal site assessments which lead to medium to large scale stormwater practice design(s) and installation to help slow or reduce runoff; and
- Projects that create and enhance habitat, including habitat for pollinator and forest interior dwelling species.

Projects that will NOT be supported under Project Track 2 include:

- Projects with requests for canopy trees that would qualify for the Tree Montgomery program;
- Projects including vegetable gardens;
- Projects that control runoff from public roads or right-of-way, sometimes referred to as “Green Street” projects, may be eligible for the Trust’s Storm Smart Chesapeake Program (<https://cbtrust.org/grants/storm-smart-chesapeake/>);
- Retrofit of existing stormwater practices. For these types of projects, see the Trust’s suite of restoration programs (<https://cbtrust.org/grants/>) or other funding mechanisms;
- Projects cannot be located on County, State, or Federal owned or leased properties, including land owned by the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC); and
- Proposals with intent for profit: e.g., Christmas trees, orchards, etc.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to discuss any projects that involve tree plantings or RainScapes project types with MCDEP staff along with the Trust. Email the Tree Montgomery program staff at Trees@montgomerycountymd.gov or the RainScapes program staff at Rainscapes@montgomerycountymd.gov to initiate communication in a timely fashion to allow for sufficient project coordination during the application period.

If you have questions about meeting the above requirements for restoration projects, reach out to Trust staff to discuss your potential project.

4.3 Project Track 3 – Water Quality Monitoring

Projects in this category will educate and engage residents in community-based water quality monitoring. Projects should increase knowledge and build monitoring skills within a priority audience/community. This

project track helps supplement MCDEP's overall dataset and understanding of stream and watershed quality trends and health. Projects in this track will be considered for award periods of up to two years. Request amounts will generally be up to \$75,000, for two-year projects.

Project Track 3 Guidelines:

- Water Quality Monitoring projects that occur on park land must receive permission in advance, obtain permits if applicable, and commit to coordinating with M-NCPPC;
- Leverage community-based monitoring to align with the County's existing monitoring efforts;
- Indicate that the applicant will join or has joined the Maryland Water Monitoring Council (MWMC) and will submit their data through the Chesapeake Monitoring Cooperative's Chesapeake Data Explorer (<https://www.chesapeakemonitoringcoop.org/services/chesapeake-data-explorer/>), if awarded. Data management will be considered an eligible part of the grant;
- Indicate intent to present the monitoring program at MWMC's Annual Roundtable: <https://dnr.maryland.gov/streams/Pages/MWMC/roundtable.aspx>;
- Engage new and diverse audiences that have historically been underrepresented in community science programs; and
- Follow robust water quality monitoring protocols outlined by the Chesapeake Monitoring Cooperative's tier I or tier II for non-tidal waters (<https://www.chesapeakemonitoringcoop.org/monitoring-programs/non-tidal-water-quality-monitoring/>) and align with best practices.

Example projects include, but are not limited to:

- Engaging community members in water quality education and stewardship building, supplemented by hands-on water quality monitoring activities;
- Projects that make the connection between stormwater runoff, the health of local water bodies, and the solutions to improve water quality, including through the building of increased monitoring capacity; and
- Water quality monitoring programs that establish baseline conditions and can be sustained over the long-term with community support.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to discuss any water quality monitoring projects with MCDEP staff along with the Trust. Email MCDEP staff at kenny.mack@montgomerycountymd.gov to initiate communication in a timely fashion to allow for sufficient project coordination during the application period.

4.4 Project Track 4 – Litter Reduction in the Anacostia River Watershed

This track is designed to broaden engagement in litter reduction efforts in the Anacostia River Watershed. Successful projects will be able to report litter/waste reduction metrics at project end and will have a plan for future maintenance/sustainability of the effort. For more details on the litter reduction efforts in the County, visit <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/departments-environmental-protection/water/keep-it-clean-montgomery-litter-reduction>. Request amounts will generally be up to \$50,000.

Project Track 4 Guidelines:

- All projects must be done in the Anacostia River Watershed. See the Montgomery County Stream Conditions map of this area at: <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/departments-environmental-protection/water/clean-water-montgomery/stream-health-monitoring>;
- Litter reduction projects outside of the Anacostia River watershed should be submitted under Project Track 1 - Public Outreach and Stewardship;
- Litter Reduction projects that occur on Park land must receive permission in advance, obtain permits if applicable, and commit to coordinating with M-NCPPC;

- Awarded projects will be required to use the County's Litter Collection form to report litter collected per clean-up event:
<https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/8b1ca0e2d9394631bcfb792d6afc8522>;
- Projects should aim to remove at least 50 pounds of trash per clean-up event; and
- Projects proposed on Federal or State land, including land owned by the State Highway Administration (SHA), are not eligible.

Example projects include, but are not limited to:

- Stream cleanups, storm drain marking, and instituting more frequent pickups of receptacles in public spaces that result in a measurable litter reduction outcome in the Anacostia Watershed;
- Community enhancement projects such as the installation of structural controls to reduce trash (e.g., solar powered or trash and recycling receptacles);
- Community workshops to train volunteers to lead cleanups, including the use of "roll off" containers to collect large amounts and bulk trash from communities and similar litter reduction efforts;
- Environmental education events, campaigns, and communication products on litter and waste reduction coupled with community cleanups resulting in a measurable collection of trash; utilizing the Keep it Clean, Montgomery call to action is highly encouraged (see <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/departments-environmental-protection/water/keep-it-clean-montgomery-litter-reduction>); and
- Projects that answer the question "What types of litter are present across land uses and what is the source of the litter?" are encouraged. Collected data must include pounds of litter removed.

5. Project Timeline

Projects must be completed within 18 months upon receipt of the award. Water Quality Monitoring projects may request up to 24 months, to allow sufficient time for seasonal water quality monitoring activities. Requests to extend the project period will be reviewed and considered on a case-by-case basis.

6. Online Application Submission Instructions

The Trust has transitioned to a new award management system, SmartSimple! To begin an application, please go to <https://cbtrust.org/grants/cleanwatermontgomery/> and click on "**Get Started**." This will take you to the SmartSimple portal, where you can log in or create an account.

If you have received an award from the Trust previously, your profile will be set up in SmartSimple. To access it, please enter the same email you used in our former system (Blackbaud), then click '**forgot password**', and follow the prompts to create a new password. If you are new to the Trust, please click on the blue "**Register**" button on the login screen. Once logged in, navigate to "**Funding Opportunities**" and select the grant program you would like to apply for.

See <https://cbtrust.org/login> for help setting up your account and finding funding opportunities.

By submitting an application to this program, applicants acknowledge that:

1. They are compliant with federal employment and non-discrimination laws and
2. They have not been debarred, convicted, charged or had a civil judgment rendered against them for fraud or related offense by any government agency (federal, state or local) or been terminated for cause or default by any government agency (federal, state, or local).

7. Deadline

Applicants must submit applications in the Chesapeake Bay Trust Online System by **4:00 PM EST on 11/13/2026**.

Late applications will not be accepted, and the online funding opportunity will close automatically and promptly at 4 PM EST. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit at least a few days prior to the deadline given the potential for high website traffic on the due date. The Trust cannot guarantee the availability of technical assistance for our online system on the deadline date.

8. Online Application Form

You will be asked to provide the following information on the online application form. Some items are required in order to submit your application. Refer to the online application for details.

Eligibility Quiz: This three-question quiz is meant to assist you in determining if your project meets the requirements of this award program and that your staff/organizational structure best supports a successful application.

Applicant Information Tab: Provide the Executive Officer's name and email address.

- Both an Executive Officer and a Project Leader, two separate individuals, must be identified for all applications.
- The Executive Officer and Project Leader must both be able to make decisions on behalf of the organization either as a board member, an employee, or other approved position recognized by the organization but not a contractor of the application.
- To avoid conflict of interest issues, individuals associated with for-profit entities to be engaged in the project cannot serve in either role.

Project Information Tab: Provide a project title; project abstract; the watershed, county, and legislative district in which the project is located; and the latitude and longitude coordinates of the project location.

- Provide a project title
- In the "Project Description" section provide the project track and project description
- Provide the project start and end date
- Provide the county, watershed, and legislative district in which the event is located; and the latitude and longitude coordinates of the project location

Watch our video on how to apply and how to submit an application using our online system at <https://cbtrust.org/grants/>.

Definitions

The Executive Officer is the individual that oversees the organization (e.g., Executive Director, Chief Executive Officer, Mayor, President or Vice President, Principal (for schools), etc.) and has the authority to sign/execute award agreements on behalf of the organization. The Executive Officer information is tied directly to all the organization's applications and should not vary from application to application. If the Executive Officer could be listed as the Project Leader in a future proposal, we recommend listing a Board Member or other higher-ranking position of the organization as the Executive Officer in order to reduce the variation in the Executive Officer across applications.

The Program Leader will be responsible for all project coordination and correspondence with the Trust for the duration of the project. The email address entered here **MUST** be the same as the email address you used to log in to the online system. The Project Leader is the primary point of contact for the application, and the email address used to submit the application via the online system must be that of the Project Leader. Applications in which the email address associated with the Project Leader in the applicant information tab of the online opportunity does not match the email address used to submit the application will not be considered for funding. The Trust cannot conduct any official correspondence with contractors or other project partners. If at any time the Project Leader cannot continue in the position, the organization must contact the Trust and assign a new qualified Project Leader.

Deliverables Tab: Provide estimated metrics for your proposed project such as project participants and outreach and restoration outcomes. Disregard deliverables that do not apply to your project.

Volunteers Tab: Provide a description of volunteer activities, the number of volunteers, and total number of volunteer hours.

Project Partnerships: Provide a list of project partner organizations or contractors, individuals, their areas of expertise, and their specific role(s) in your project.

Applicants are encouraged to upload a Letter of Commitment for the project from each partner describing in detail the partner's role or contribution to the project. Applications including strong Letter(s) of Commitment often receive higher scores. If not submitted with the application, Letter(s) of Commitment may be required prior to the release of any awarded funding. To better understand the Trust's definition of and policy on Letter(s) of Commitment, visit our Forms and Policies webpage: cbtrust.org/grants/applicant-resources-forms-policies/.

Narrative & Supporting Documents Tab: Use the links below to download the *required* narrative questions template for the track you are applying to. Complete all questions and upload the completed document as a Microsoft Word or PDF file.

- Project Track 1: [Public Outreach and Stewardship](#)
- Project Track 2: [Community Based Restoration](#)
- Project Track 3: [Water Quality Monitoring](#)
- Project Track 4: [Litter Reduction in the Anacostia River Watershed](#)

Budget Tab:

You will be asked to enter items into budget categories. Totals will be automatically calculated on the page. Additional guidance on navigating the budget section can be found at [Grants Portal Login - Chesapeake Bay Trust](#). You will also be asked to provide a descriptive budget narrative to justify and explain costs. If the success of the work is contingent upon award of other funds, make this clear in your budget justification.

Terms and Conditions Tab: Agree to the specified terms and conditions for the program for which you are applying.

Demographics and Survey Tab (optional): Provide voluntary demographic information. Provide information about your organization's current diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice (DEIJ) efforts and future goals. Additionally, provide voluntary feedback on the application process.

9. Evaluation Criteria

The following criteria will be used by external technical expert reviewers to evaluate applications under the Clean Water Montgomery Grant Program. The Trust staff will serve as guidance through the review phase. Projects must abide by all County laws and regulations. Preference will be given to applications that meet multiple criteria.

Equity Priority (10 points):
• Is the audience that will be engaged in the project or physical project located in a <i>Highly Disproportionate – Disadvantaged</i> or <i>Moderately Disproportionate – Disadvantaged</i> area per Montgomery Planning's

Community Equity Index mapping tool (https://community-equity-index-mncppc-mcplanning.hub.arcgis.com/)? Does the project demonstrate authentic engagement or involved role of a historically underrepresented community or audience, as outlined in Appendix C?
Justification (Project Need) (15 points):
- Does the applicant justify the project need? - For all projects, is the project located or engaging community members in a priority stormwater management suitability area, per this map: https://mcgov-gis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/instant/sidebar/index.html?appid=cf0529f73d3a4e3bbdd899598bf73331?
Cost Effectiveness/Budget (15 points):
- Is the budget appropriate, cost effective, and justified in the narrative? - If personnel costs are requested, are they reasonable and justified for the type of project and proposed outcomes? - For contractual work, was the work competitively bid or were estimates from at least three consultants or contractors considered?
Consistency with RFP (15 points):
- Is the project proposed consistent with the intent and guidelines of the project track selected? - Are all application components included that allow for sound evaluation, as outlined in Appendix A? If not, has the applicant addressed how that information will be secured/finalized, if awarded? - Will the project support the advancement of the County's watershed restoration goals/requirements (e.g. Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4), Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs), watershed restoration plan) through public engagement and physical restoration efforts?
Likelihood of Project Success (15 points):
- What is the likelihood that this project will accomplish the proposed outcomes? - Are methodologies and/or designs sound and consistent with best practices?
Sustainability (10 points):
- Has the applicant addressed future project sustainability (e.g., ongoing resources)? - If the lead applicant is not a member of the community impacted by the project, is a transfer of "ownership" to the community/responsible party built into the project and the ability to carry the work forward developed? - For knowledge-building, behavior change, water quality monitoring, or litter reduction projects: Will the impacts of the work be felt after the award period has ended? - For implementation projects: - Has a five-year detailed maintenance plan that includes a monthly schedule for weeding, watering, seasonal cleanup and dead plant replacement been addressed? - Does the property owner agree to apply to the Water Quality Protection Charge Credit Program after project completion, if applicable?
Partnerships (10 points):
- Do the partnerships leverage organizational strengths and enhance project outcomes? - Has the applicant leveraged existing resources, such as connecting to complementary community-based or County-led watershed stewardship programs, organizations, or efforts?
Demonstration Value and Transferability (10 points):
- Can the project serve as a model and/or be replicated in other communities? - Does the project educate and engage people in ways that promote positive attitudes and behaviors to benefit local watersheds of Montgomery County?

10. Application Review Process

Each application is reviewed by a Technical Review Committee (TRC), composed of individuals who are experts in the fields supported by this RFP and represent communities engaged by projects funded by this RFP. The TRC ranks and scores all applications based on the criteria listed in the “Evaluation Criteria” section above, then meets to discuss the application merits. The TRC then recommends a suite of applications to the Trust’s Board of Trustees.

This grant program reserves the right to approve funding for projects and budget items that meet specified funding priorities and that meet the goals of Montgomery County.

To allow applicants to set expectations prior to investing time in the application, the Trust provides historical application approval rates for the same or similar programs. The average approval rate from the last three rounds in this grant program is 62%, including both fully and partially funded applications.

11. Awards and Notifications

The FY27 Clean Water Montgomery Grant Program awards are anticipated to be announced in March 2027.

All applicants will receive a letter stating the funding partnership’s decision. An application may be declined, partially awarded, or fully awarded. If approved, the Trust will send an award agreement with award conditions and due dates of status, progress, and final reports. The Trust will distribute the first award payment to the requesting organization following: satisfaction of any phase one payment award contingencies, including upload of the signed award agreement. **Ten percent of the total award will be held until the final report is submitted and approved.** In cases where the awardee fails to submit a status report, progress report, final report, or other requirement by the due date, the Trust reserves the right to terminate the award agreement and require a refund of funds already transferred to the awardee.

When the project is complete, awardees are required to complete final reports that may include but are not limited to submission of all receipts for any purchases, invoices for subcontractors/contractors, and copies of timesheets for personnel time used (timesheets must include date, name, time worked per day, and coding to tie the time worked to the award). All financial back-up documentation will be grouped and numbered to correspond to the budget line item reported as spent. Organizations with outstanding final, progress, or status reports, or pending refunds, may be declined or if awarded funding will be required to submit all outstanding items prior to receiving additional award funds.

12. About the Program Partners

Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection (MCDEP) works to “enhance the quality of life in our community by protecting and improving Montgomery County's air, water, and land in a sustainable, innovative, inclusive, and industry-leading way while fostering smart growth, a thriving more sustainable economy and healthy communities.”

The [Chesapeake Bay Trust](#) (Trust) is a nonprofit, grant-making organization dedicated to improving the bays, streams, rivers, forests, parks, and other natural resources of our local systems, from the Chesapeake to the Coastal Bays to the Youghiogheny River. The Trust, supported in large part by Maryland’s Chesapeake Bay

License Plate, and partnerships with other regional funders, engages and empowers diverse groups to take actions that enrich natural resources and local communities of the Chesapeake Bay region. Since 1985, the Trust has awarded over \$254 million in grants to municipalities, nonprofit organizations, schools, and public agencies throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

Appendix A: Application Supporting Documents Checklist

Use the checklist below to upload the appropriate supporting documentation for your project track. If certain documentation or project information is not available at the time of application, provide details on how that documentation/information will be secured or finalized, if awarded.

General Requirements for All Projects	☒
<u>Letter(s) of Commitment</u> : Have you included documented support for and of the project from collaborators who have a committed role to help with this project? View the Trust's Letter of Commitment Guidance and Policy at: https://cbtrust.org/grants/applicant-resources-forms-policies/ .	☐
Track 1: Public Outreach and Stewardship	☒
<u>Knowledge Objectives</u> : Have you included a list of your knowledge objectives that tell us what participants will learn from your project?	☐
<u>Evaluation plan</u> : Have you included methods of evaluation in knowledge for project participants, such as drafts of pre- and post-surveys?	☐
<u>For publication requests</u> :	
Have you provided a <u>detailed dissemination plan</u> , to include an estimated number of copies for each audience, content outline, and draft text or mockup of proposed publication?	☐
Have you provided a list that describes any <u>previously developed publications</u> like those proposed (publication requests without an explanation of how the request compares to other similar publications or that conflict with County content will not be approved)?	☐
<u>For an education event or workshop request</u> :	
Have you provided a recruitment strategy and promotion plans?	☐
Have you provided a sample agenda?	☐
Have you provided an outline of the program?	☐
Have you provided the location of the event or workshop? <i>*Note: Outreach and Stewardship projects that occur on park land must receive permission in advance, obtain permits if applicable, and commit to coordinating with M-NCPPC.</i>	☐
<u>For website and on-line media request</u> :	
Have you provided a plan to drive traffic to the site, such as a social media strategy?	☐
Have you provided a sample website design, if available?	☐
Track 2: Community-Based Restoration Projects	☒
<u>Percolation test results (if applicable)</u> : Have you completed a percolation test and provided the results? (Directions for how to complete a percolation test can be found here: https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/dep/resources/files/rainscapes/How-to-do-a-Perc-Test.pdf)	☐
<u>Proposed project design</u> : Have you provided a plan view or site/concept plan, if designs are not completed? <i>*Note: If awarded, a final, completed site plan must be submitted to the Trust for approval prior to any installation work.</i>	☐
<u>Planting Plans</u> : If designs are completed, have you provided a scaled planting plan and a detailed plant list? Does the plant list specify the scientific names and varieties of plants, their quantities, spacing, and container sizes? Guidance for developing a planting plan can be found at: https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/DEP/Resources/Files/rainscapes/planting-plan.pdf	☐

- Guidance for determining quantity of plants and materials needed can be found at: https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/department-environmental-protection/property-care/rainscapes/rainscapes-plant-spacing-guide - A blank plant list can be found at: https://assets.montgomerycountymd.gov/files/2026-04/blank-plant-list-accessible.xlsx	
Does the planting plan include a graphic scale (e.g., <-----> = 8', not 1" = 8') that shows the project's location in relation to the property (including nearby buildings and features), clearly define the project area, and indicate plant locations along with their quantities?	☐
<u>Landowner permission</u> : Did you include a letter from the property owner stating approval to implement the project at the site for projects implemented on property not owned by the applicant?	☐
<u>Detailed maintenance plan</u> : If designs are completed, did you include a detailed, draft maintenance plan signed by the entity responsible for maintenance and the landowner (if different than organization applying)? The maintenance plan must detail maintenance activities in the short-term (1 to 5 years) and in the long-term (5 to 10 years). See the Trust's maintenance plan template and resources at https://cbtrust.org/grants/applicant-resources-forms-policies/ .	☐
<u>Pre-application site visit</u> : Did you complete a pre-application site visit with MCDEP and the Trust? Have you completed and uploaded the pre-application site visit worksheet for restoration projects? You can view the worksheet here: https://cbtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/CWM-Pre-Application-Site-Worksheet-8.18.26.pdf .	☐
Track 3: Water Quality Monitoring	☒
<u>Knowledge Objectives</u> : Have you included a list of your knowledge objectives that tell us what participants will learn from your project?	☐
<u>Evaluation plan</u> : Have you included methods of evaluation in knowledge for project participants, such as drafts of pre- and post-surveys?	☐
<u>Monitoring Sites</u> :	
Have you included a list of proposed monitoring sites? <i>*Note: Water Quality Monitoring projects that occur on park land must receive permission in advance, obtain permits if applicable, and commit to coordinating with M-NCPPC.</i>	☐
Have you included metrics you intend to collect?	☐
<u>Volunteer recruitment</u> :	
Have you provided a recruitment strategy and promotion plans for volunteers?	☐
Have you provided a training plan?	☐
Have you provided an outline of draft program or presentations that will be used (if applicable)?	☐
Track 4: Litter Reduction in the Anacostia River Watershed	☒
<u>Knowledge Objectives</u> : Have you included a list of your knowledge objectives that tell us what participants will learn from your project?	☐
<u>Evaluation plan</u> : Have you included methods of evaluation in knowledge for project participants, such as drafts of pre- and post-surveys?	☐
<u>Volunteer recruitment</u> :	
Have you provided a recruitment strategy and promotion plans for volunteers?	☐
Have you provided a training plan?	☐
Have you provided an outline of draft program or presentations that will be used (if applicable)?	☐
<u>Proposed location(s) of litter clean ups</u> : Have you provided the proposed locations of the litter clean ups? <i>*Note: Litter Reduction projects that occur on Park land must receive permission in advance, obtain permits if applicable, and commit to coordinating with M-NCPPC.</i>	☐

Appendix B: Additional Resources

Montgomery County Programs and Resources	- Montgomery County's Clean Water Montgomery website: https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/department-environmental-protection/water/clean-water-montgomery - Suitability & Equity Mapping Tools: https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/department-environmental-protection/water/clean-water-montgomery/watershed-restoration/watershed-planning - RainScapes program overview: https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/department-environmental-protection/property-care/rainscapes - Tree Montgomery overview: https://treemontgomery.org/
Chesapeake Bay Trust Resources	- Trust's additional resources page on outreach, social marketing tools, native plants, maintenance, etc.: https://cbtrust.org/grants/applicant-resources-forms-policies/ - Native Plant Species Selection Guide: https://cbtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/External_Final-Trust-Draft-Plant-Species-Selection-Guide-Oct2021.pdf - Mini Community Engagement and Restoration Grant Program: https://cbtrust.org/grants/community-engagement/
Behavior Change	- Chesapeake Behavior Change, an online behavior change campaign database: https://www.chesapeakebehaviorchange.org/ - View Behavior Change Planning and Process Guidelines here: https://cbtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/Guidelines-and-Information-for-Behavior-Change-Projects_8.6.24.pdf
Community-Based Restoration	- Montgomery County Site Assessment form: https://cbtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/DEP-Blank-Site-Assessment-form.pdf - An example completed form can be found here: https://cbtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/DEP-Example-Site-Assessment-form.pdf - Montgomery County Rain Garden Resources (including Rain Garden Technical Manual, How to make a Planting Plan, Plant Calculator, and Suggested Plant Lists): https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/department-environmental-protection/property-care/rainscapes/rainscapes-stormwater-garden-rain-garden - Montgomery County Permeable Pavement Resources (including Permeable Pavement Technical Manual and Contractor List): https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/department-environmental-protection/property-care/rainscapes/rainscapes-permeable-pavement-retrofit - Montgomery County Percolation Test Guidance: https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/DEP/Resources/Files/rainscapes/How-to-do-a-Perc-Test.pdf - Chesapeake Bay Landscape Professional's Maintenance Template: https://cbtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/Annual-Landscape-Maintenance-Plan.docx - Example of a completed RainScapes Maintenance Template for Conservation Landscaping: https://cbtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/CL_MaintenancePlan_general.pdf - Choosing the Right Tree, Attaining Your Tree, and Site Preparation Considerations: https://cbtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/Choosing-the-Right-Tree-Attaining-Your-Tree-and-Site-Preparation-Considerations_7.28.25.pdf - M-NCPPC Trees Approved Technical Manual for Montgomery County: http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/environment/forest/trees/toc_trees.shtm - Soil Survey Mapping: http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/HomePage.htm
Water Quality Monitoring	- Chesapeake Monitoring Cooperative's Chesapeake Data Explorer: https://www.chesapeakemonitoringcoop.org/services/chesapeake-data-explorer/ - Maryland Water Monitoring Council: https://dnr.maryland.gov/streams/pages/mwmc/index.aspx - Water quality monitoring protocols outlined by the Chesapeake Monitoring Cooperative's tier I or tier II for non-tidal waters: https://www.chesapeakemonitoringcoop.org/monitoring-programs/non-tidal-water-quality-monitoring/

Appendix C: Additional Guidance for Public Outreach and Stewardship Projects

The common starting place of project development includes defining an issue and selecting a priority audience impacted by that issue. Most importantly, the audience selected should be considered a key partner in the development and/or refinement of solutions and program offerings. Below are best practices for equitable and inclusive community engagement, adapted from Montgomery Planning's Equitable Engagement Guide (https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/MP_EquitableEngagementGuide_FINAL_revised.pdf).

Clarity: Clearly identify the purpose and goals of outreach and engagement at each stage and phase of a plan or project. Define what you are asking of audiences and/or inviting them to do at each stage.

Inclusiveness + Equity: The engagement plan and engagement activities should encourage and facilitate participation by those who may be affected by the plan or project, and those who are historically underrepresented in the planning process. Provide multiple opportunities for participation. Strategies and tactics must be culturally sensitive and provide the resources/accommodations needed to ensure full participation by all communities. Be adaptable and flexible to ensure equitable engagement. Consider literacy level, socioeconomic status, language, culture, and physical and mental ability. It may also be helpful to acknowledge and address past inequities, preferably those identified by community members.

Flexibility: Meeting the needs of diverse populations requires you to embrace a culture and remain adaptable and flexible. Celebrate learning while doing, constantly building and evolving as you learn more about and from community members.

Collaboration: Involve the community early and often, even at the early stages of planning. Build and maintain ongoing and mutually beneficial relationships with community members, especially community influencers, community-based organizations, and other groups trusted by the community. Design engagement experiences that encourage listening and learning together.

Respect: Plan outreach and engagement well to meet the needs of community members and respect their experiences, knowledge, opinions, time, and life circumstances. Clearly communicate the purpose for community engagement and how the community's participation will impact outcomes. Provide community members with the information needed to meaningfully participate. Ensure that all communication (written, visual, verbal) is culturally appropriate, inclusive, and accessible. When in doubt, consult with an expert or direct representative of a particular community, group, culture, or organization to learn more about them.

Authenticity: Engage community members only when their involvement will have a meaningful impact on recommendations or plans. Do not undertake community engagement when decisions have already been made, to check a required box, and/or when promised outcomes cannot be delivered. Honor time and capacity for participation. This includes building awareness of and trust with ongoing communications to clarify roles and value to all stakeholders and to increase equitable community stakeholder engagement with the planning process. Facilitate open conversations where participants listen to each other and are able to share freely. Also, make sure you have concrete ideas for how you can put community input into action.

Strong relationships + sustained engagement: Build knowledge, understanding, and capacity over time, learning from successes and missteps along the way. Each plan and project – and all the time in between – provide an opportunity to build and strengthen relationships with community members, influencers, community groups, and

other organizations. As these relationships develop, you will learn more about community issues and better understand the demographic, cultural, economic, social, and other realities of community members. Make sure to keep the community members and other stakeholders informed after the project is implemented.

Transparency + Responsiveness: Communicate often and clearly with the community members and stakeholders. Clearly state who is involved in and who organizes engagement activities. Proactively share public feedback and demonstrate how feedback was used to inform recommendations or plans, or why it was not. Be responsive to community members' and other stakeholders' questions, concerns, comments, and ideas.

Evaluation/shared results: Develop and share success measures at the beginning of the planning process and reevaluate them before beginning each phase of the process. Develop tools and mechanisms for evaluation and reporting. Evaluate outreach and engagement strategies on an ongoing basis and celebrate progress with the community. Develop a system for consistently learning from audience response and feedback, including questions to help better understand the needs and outreach and engagement preferences of various groups. Share results internally and externally to improve future outcomes. Evaluate strategies and activities for effectiveness.

Easy participation: When communicating with diverse groups, be mindful that others may not have the same context or have a different level of knowledge on the subject matter that you may have. Their reality and experience may differ from yours. Position outreach and engagement in a way that is relevant to the audience(s). Consider the most accessible and convenient ways for community members to participate. Engagement activities should not require prior knowledge of the subject area. Consider the timing of meetings and events relative to school, work, or mealtimes; the need for provision of childcare; and the importance of offering meals or food. Consider alternatives to in-person meetings such as telephone calls or virtual meetings. Choose locations where community members feel comfortable and that can be easily accessed by public transportation, bicycle, or walking, and that have sufficient parking. Choose days and times that the community can best participate, such as evenings and weekends. Reduce barriers to participation via stipends, gift cards, incentives, and more.

Efficiency: Use outreach and engagement methods and tools that are appropriate to the phase in the process and the purpose of outreach and engagement. Avoid duplication of efforts. Identify and collaborate with Montgomery County government, community-based groups, and other organizations already engaging the community and work to collaborate. Align efforts where possible to bring together varied perspectives. Partner with organizations by co-hosting listening sessions and events, providing content for their events and communications, and resourcing their staff with tools like social media posts, meetings in a box, and talking points.

Some appropriate forms of outreach and engagement may include:

- **INFORMING** community members of the process, purpose and goals, and milestones. Informational activities may include web pages, blog posts, flyers, emails, tabling, and presentations with Q&A.
- **EDUCATING** community members about the plan or project concepts, goals, and how data contributes to decisions. Educational activities may include data sharing, videos, infographics, panels, and story maps.
- **STORYTELLING** with community members. Asking community members to share pictures, stories, and videos about themselves or the subject at hand so other stakeholders and officials can learn about the issues from a human perspective. Story-telling activities may include photo contests, interviews, and social media campaigns sharing personal stories.

Appendix D: Additional Guidance and Requirements for Community Restoration Projects

The table below shows the average costs per size for residential BMP installations from the RainScapes Rebate Program in 2026; this table is meant to serve as guidance for applicants when building out restoration budgets.

Project Type	Average cost per square foot
Permeable Pavers	\$34.32
Conservation Landscaping	\$16.47
Rain Gardens	\$24.49
Green Roofs	\$23.50
Water Harvesting	\$2.32 (per gallon)

For projects that include the **installation of herbaceous plants, understory trees and shrubs**, projects must meet the following requirements:

- Herbaceous plants, understory tree and shrub species must be native to the Mid-Atlantic and/or Southeast USA region;
- A minimum of two growing seasons/years of maintenance must be provided. A maintenance agreement, signed by the landowner, will be required upon award to ensure long-term maintenance;
- All herbaceous plants, trees and shrubs must either have a one-year warranty from the supplier and/or installer, OR demonstrate a higher-density planting plan (115% of the original planting plan spread evenly across trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants) to account for mortality;
All understory trees must have a diameter of at least 1 inch in caliper;
- All shrubs must be in a 5-gallon pot or larger;
- Herbaceous plant container size should be landscape plugs (2" x 5") or larger;
- Seeding can only be allowed as filler between plants;
- The quantity of plants required for a project does not change based on the size of plant containers used; and
- Native herbaceous annuals should make up no more than 5% of the herbaceous plant density.

For projects that include the **installation of permeable pavers**, projects must meet the following requirements:

- Permeable pavement systems shall consist of permeable interlocking concrete pavers (PICP) installed with aggregate-filled joints in accordance with the manufacturer's published specifications and installation requirements;
- Pavers shall conform to ASTM C936, be a minimum of 80 mm (3¼ inches) thick, and be rated for vehicular traffic applications;
- The system shall include rigid concrete edge restraints installed in accordance with industry standards. Plastic, aluminum, or other flexible edge restraints shall not be permitted;
- Permeable pavement systems shall not be installed on slopes exceeding 10%;
- Installations on slopes greater than 5% shall include subsurface check dams, flow barriers, or equivalent measures within the stone reservoir;
- The project site shall demonstrate adequate infiltration capacity through one or more percolation tests;

- Waterproofing to adjacent building and retaining wall foundations shall be included where necessary;
- Underdrains, overdrains (overflow drains), or other drainage controls may be required based on site constraints and infiltration test results;
- Projects subject to heavy vehicular loading, including emergency vehicle access routes, fire lanes, loading areas, refuse collection routes, or areas regularly traversed by dump trucks or other heavy vehicles shall be structurally designed in accordance with accepted industry standards for the anticipated loading conditions; and
- The ratio of contributing drainage area to permeable pavement area shall not exceed 5:1 unless otherwise approved by the Program Manager.