

THE
NEVADA DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
BUREAU OF WATER QUALITY PLANNING
NONPOINT SOURCE POLLUTION MANAGEMENT PROGRAM
IS SOLICITING PROPOSALS FOR:

Watershed-Based Plan Development

2024 Grant Funding Opportunity (GFO)

OPENING DATE & TIME: June 12, 2024 @ 8:00 AM PST



NEVADA DIVISION OF
**ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION**



Nevada Department of
**CONSERVATION &
NATURAL RESOURCES**

A. INTRODUCTION

Nonpoint source pollution is the primary cause of water quality impairments throughout Nevada and the nation. Nonpoint source (NPS) pollution, unlike pollution from industrial and sewage treatment plants, comes from many diffuse sources (See NAC 445A.309). NPS pollution is caused by rainfall or snowmelt moving over and through the ground. As the runoff moves, it picks up and carries away natural and human-made pollutants, finally depositing them into lakes, rivers, streams, wetlands, and ground water.

The overall aim of the federal Nonpoint Source Program administered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) is to restore and protect waters across the nation. The focus of the federal NPS Program is the removal of waters from the state's 303(d) impaired waterbodies list. This is primarily accomplished through the issuance of Clean Water Act 319(h) funds to designated states and tribal agencies to implement their approved nonpoint source management plans. Within Nevada, most of this grant funding is passed on to proponents seeking to implement actions to improve water quality.

USEPA guidance prioritizes 319(h) funding be utilized on implementation efforts within watersheds with approved watershed-based plans (WBPs). To gain approval, WBPs should, at a minimum, include the following nine elements:

1. Pollutant sources or causes
2. Management measures to be implemented to address pollutant sources/causes
3. Load reduction estimates for management measures to be implemented
4. Estimate of technical and financial assistance needed
5. Stakeholder information and engagement component
6. Implementation schedule
7. Measurable implementation milestones
8. Indicators to measure progress
9. Monitoring component to evaluate progress.

Housed within the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection's Bureau of Water Quality Planning, the Nevada Nonpoint Source Program (NVNPS Program) operates within the framework of the federal NPS Program to restore and protect waters of the State. As such, the majority of 319(h) funding received is reserved for implementation within watersheds with approved WBPs. However, only four WBPs currently exist within Nevada. The NVNPS Program has issued this Grant Funding Opportunity (GFO) solicitation seeking out partners and champions to create additional plans.

B. FUNDING DESCRIPTION

Selected proposals will be awarded federal funds made available to Nevada under the Clean Water Act Section 319(h). These federal funds must be matched by non-federal sources on a one-to-one basis as either in-kind or cash contributions. Selected proposals will be administered through a subgrant agreement between NDEP and the selected entity.

1. **Due Date:** Proposals will be accepted for consideration until sufficient projects have been identified to satisfy the available funding.
2. **Funding Available:** The overall funding available is \$200,000. The NVNPS Program anticipates funding up to five efforts using this funding.
3. **Eligibility:** The following agencies and organizations are eligible to apply for and receive 319(h) funds:
 - a. Federal, State, local, and tribal governments.
 - b. Interstate and intrastate public agencies.
 - c. Public and private nonprofit organizations (501(c)(3) organizations).
 - d. Educational institutions (public institutions that are not-for-profit institutions that are barred from lobbying).
4. **Allowable Activities:** The following activities qualify for funding under this GFO:
 - a. Planning activities (e.g., modeling, GIS database mining, etc.) that will result in new nine element Watershed-Based Plans consistent with USEPA's [Handbook for Developing Watershed Plans to Restore and Protect our Waters](#).
 - b. Assistance, training, and workshops for stakeholders (e.g., landowners, agency personnel, etc.) that will facilitate participation in the planning process.
 - c. Planning activities that will support, strengthen, or update accepted WBPs (existing plans include those for the [Carson River](#), the [Las Vegas Wash](#) and Lake Tahoe- via the [Tahoe TMDL](#)).

This list is not exhaustive of all possible activities that could be eligible. Proponents are encouraged to contact NPS program officers and/or the NVNPS Branch Supervisor if there are further questions regarding eligibility.

5. **Special Interest Elements:** This list of *elements of special interest* is intended to highlight some possible project activities that may be relevant to planned work and could be useful to develop and highlight when appropriate (it is not intended to be, nor shall it be interpreted as, a directive for their inclusion in any proposal).
 - a. Activities targeting plans for improvements in small watershed(s) [e.g., 1-3 hydrologic units (USGS HUC12); <https://nas.er.usgs.gov/hucs.aspx>].
 - b. Plans targeting watersheds within Nevada's [Shared Stewardship Priority Landscapes](#) (where potential partnerships and co-benefits with state and federal agencies as well as Tribal interests are likely).
 - c. Development of novel coordinated approaches that facilitate implementation and enhancement of environmental NPS-mitigation efforts (plans that incorporate coordinated restoration and conservation easement plans).
 - d. Development of WBPs that seek to improve water quality in and for Disadvantaged Communities or Underserved Communities as defined respectively in [NAC 445A.675245](#) or [NRS 445A.425](#).

- e. WBPs that address NPS pollutant loads associated with wildfires or extreme storm events.
 - f. WBPs aimed at mitigation of recurring harmful algal blooms (HABs).
 - g. WBPs aiming to incorporate conservation easements, land conversion, and low-tech process-based restoration efforts.
 - h. WBPs that may also provide co-benefits beyond NPS reductions (e.g., improve wildlife/fisheries habitat, decrease risk of wildland fire, etc.).
 - i. Efforts that strengthen one or more elements of existing accepted WBPs.
6. What activities are not eligible? The following do not qualify for 319(h) funding under this GFO:
- a. Activities related to specific requirements of a draft or final NPDES permit.
 - b. Ambient monitoring or monitoring to determine if a waterbody is impaired.
 - c. General planning, assessment, or research activities.
 - d. General education programs and activities not tied to implementation activities.
 - e. Activities that could be considered general operations of an organization.
 - f. Implementation projects or effectiveness monitoring activities for past projects.
 - d. Planning for prevention activities for drafting or finalization of National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit (e.g., Stormwater MS4 Phase I or Phase II Stormwater Permit) are NOT allowed.

C. PROPOSAL SUBMITTAL AND SELECTION PROCESS

1. Proposal Submittal: Proposals will be accepted on a continual basis until available WBP development funding is satisfied. Therefore, applicants are encouraged to apply as soon as possible as this solicitation may close at any time. However, if the targeted funding amount is not satisfied within six weeks of the GFO release date, submitted proposals will be reviewed at that time.

Electronic submittal of the application is required unless a determination of hardship is made by NPS Program staff. Submit proposals to:

Christian H. Fritsen
 Supervisor, NPS Pollution Branch
 Bureau of Water Quality Planning
 Nevada Division of Environmental Protection
cfritsen@ndep.nv.gov

2. Proposal Contents: The following sections are required to be included in the application.

- a. **Project Summary** (500 words or less)- A brief description of the problem and work to be performed along with information regarding submitting organization, contact information, location(s) of work, and a short fiscal summary.
- b. **Scope of Work** (SOW) (3-4 pages maximum)- A succinct description of the watershed and NPS issue(s) that will be addressed and the approach and timeline to provide all nine elements within an USEPA-accepted WBP.

Note: The proposal must demonstrate how the WBP will be developed. If elements of a WBP are available within existing documents and plans, these can be compiled or referenced to attain all nine elements in a USEPA-accepted WBP. Also, if there is an existing watershed plan and this needs to be updated, the proposal must explicitly identify what elements are lacking and define steps needed to address these elements.

Importantly, the WBP does not need to be drafted before this proposal. Rather, the proposal should demonstrate how the resources would be used to construct the plan if the proposal were to be funded.

Additionally, the SOW must document that the proposed project is not implementing or is being used in drafting or submitting a NPDES permit.

- c. **Project Schedule and Deliverables**- task milestones and deliverables associated with development of a WBP must be provided. A schedule identifying project milestones should be provided in the proposal. Activities should not last more than one to two years in duration. Funding of activities past one year will be subject to satisfactory progress and availability of funding- if applicable.
- d. **Budget and Budget Justification** (Salaries/Wages, Operating Costs, Travel, Participant Support)- the project budget shall include task-specific costs and how federal and/or match funds are applied. The budget and budget justification must identify the amount requested from NDEP-BWQP and should distinguish between cash match and in-kind match (value of contributed goods and services or volunteer hours).
- e. **Letters of Commitment**- Commitment letters must recognize and commit partners to the project. The roles of each partner must be defined. Moreover, these letters shall recognize the level and type of match commitments from each partner. Small watersheds may only require limited partnerships. Larger watersheds may involve more. Regardless of the commitments and partnerships, the level of the partnerships and associated commitment needed to successfully implement the plan should be justified. General letters of support from non-participatory people or organizations are not allowed.

- f. Results of Prior Support-** Describe results of prior NDEP 319(h) funding (if applicable).
 - g. Current and Pending Support-** Provide a list of current and pending grants and contracts and time allocations for each funding source (used to evaluate proponent commitments).
 - h. References/Citations-** shall be provided for referenced works as applicable.
- 3. Proposal Evaluation:** Successful planning proposals will provide detailed steps that will be taken for the identification and/or development of all nine elements in Watershed-Based Plans (and inclusion of relevant planning documents that contain some or all of the information needed to fulfill the elements of a WBP). The following criteria will be considered in evaluating and ranking submitted proposals for WBP and development efforts:
- a.** The proposal clearly identifies a watershed and justifies the need for water quality improvements/restoration. The proposal includes a description of the goals and objectives and clearly demonstrates the connection of the proposed efforts to known impairments, nonpoint source pollution reduction, and water quality improvements. (15%)
 - b.** The planning effort identifies the steps that will be taken to attain all nine elements of a WBP. (40%)
 - c.** The proposal defines the levels of commitment from cooperating agencies (state or federal) and outlines the roles and responsibilities of each. The plan includes collaboration with stakeholders and organizations necessary to accomplish the goals and objectives of the planning efforts. (15%)
 - d.** Cost Effectiveness. The proposal minimizes administrative, overhead, and indirect costs. (15%)
 - e.** Other evaluation criteria (15%)
 - i.** Technical Merit (5%) – The proposal includes sound justification and methodology for developing or updating a watershed-based plan. The methodology is achievable and practical for planning efforts. Proposal deliverables are measurable or quantifiable.
 - ii.** Transferability (5%) – Development of additional watershed-based plans is necessary to ensure a coordinated approach to address nonpoint source pollution throughout Nevada. The proposal includes efforts to transfer knowledge gained through the proposed planning efforts to other watersheds to facilitate efficient and effective plan development throughout the state.

- iii. Plan Sustainability (5%) - The proposal identifies means of ensuring success of the watershed-based plan following NDEP and USEPA acceptance.

Note: WBPs are only viewed as being complete when all nine elements are identified and are accepted by USEPA. Clear plans for the completion of these elements will be given highest priority.

Ranking of proposals are to be completed by a review committee and final decisions regarding granting subawards are subject to review by NDEP Administration and USEPA.

4. Award Notification and Contract Development: The Proposal Review Committee and selecting authorities seeks to notify proposers of proposal status within one month of their submission. Intended recipients of grant awards will be contacted by NPS Program staff to discuss development of a Subgrant Agreement (contract) necessary for final awarding of federal funds.

Note: subgrant agreements can require one to three months to execute depending upon proposal complexity and ability of subgrantees to complete required approval processes (including updates to any project milestones and permitting conditions that may be necessary).

D. IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS FOR APPLICANTS

1. Contractual Agreement (Subgrant Agreement). Applicants approved for 319(h) funding must enter into a legal contract with the State of Nevada. The contract forms, which include specific NDEP terms and conditions, were developed and approved by the State of Nevada and the NDEP Administrator. Applicants must be willing to accept—without revision—the language and conditions contained in the contract forms. Copies of these forms are available upon request.
2. Reimbursable Funds. 319(h) funds are available only on a reimbursable basis. Therefore, applicants must have the ability to pay for project expenses upfront and then request reimbursement from BWQP by submitting invoices with proof of payment of expenses on a quarterly basis.
3. Liability Insurance. Additional liability insurance requirements are imposed on independent contractors and/or subcontractors. If the project includes hiring an independent contractor (i.e., consulting firm or private business) to complete all or a portion of the proposed work, please contact the NPS Program staff for additional information.
4. Reporting Requirements (Quarterly and Final Reports). Grantees will be required to submit quarterly reports during the project duration and a final report for approval. Final report preparation costs may be included in the project budget, but in this case, final report related expenditures must be completed prior to a

contract's expiration to be reimbursed. Draft final reports will be due before the end of the grant expiration date to allow sufficient time for staff review, as well as time to make final corrections, as needed. Failure to submit a final report on time may result in a delay in final payment.

Final reports nominally contain an overview of project results pertaining to the goals, objectives, and deliverables as stated in the subaward agreement. Final reports also will include information relevant to the completed activities.

Common information contained in final reports for planning include the following:

- Listing of participants and stakeholders that participated in the planning.
- Data and/or products produced during the grant period (publications, programs, etc.).
- A draft of a Watershed-Based Plan submitted to NDEP.
- A description of the challenges and/or barriers encountered during project implementation and the actions taken to overcome these obstacles.
- Recommendations for future related activities – as applicable.

To sign up for announcements related to Nevada's Nonpoint Source Pollution Program (including future information on Grant Funding Opportunities) please go to the [NPS Grant webpage](#) and select the "Get Notices" button located in the lower right hand corner- then select the "to Nonpoint Source Pollution Management Program" from the dropdown menu.

Please contact Christian H. Fritsen at (775) 687-9558 or via email at cfritsen@ndep.nv.gov if you have any questions concerning the proposal application, or if you would like to discuss project ideas, and/or project eligibility. Note that the Proposal Review Committee may contact you for additional information and/or to request a site visit.

**Appendix A:
Additional Resources**

1. [Nevada's 2020/2022 Integrated Report](#) and [2020/2022 Integrated Report WebMapping Tool](#)
2. Watershed-Based Planning Resources
 - a. [USEPA Handbook for Developing Watershed Plans to Restore and Protect Our Waters](#)
 - b. [Critical Source Area Identification and BMP Selection: Supplement to Watershed planning Handbook](#)
 - c. [Recovery Potential Screening \(RPS\) tool](#)
3. [Pollutant Load Estimation tool \(PLET\)](#)
4. [How's My Waterway?](#)
5. [Nevada Water Quality Data Warehouse Viewer](#)
6. [Watershed Index Online \(WSIO\)](#)
7. [USGS Hydrologic Unit Code \(HUC\) Watershed tool](#)
8. [EPA WATERS Geoviewer](#)
9. BMP Reference Manuals
 - a. [Nevada Department of Transportation](#)
 - b. [Las Vegas Valley](#)
 - c. [Lake Tahoe Basin \(Tahoe Regional Planning Agency\)](#)
10. [Natural Resource and Conservation Service \(NRCS\): Conservation Practice Standards](#)
11. [NRCS- Field Office Technical Guide for Nevada](#)

Appendix B:
Guidance for Budget Construction

a. Match Requirements. All proposed projects must include non-federal matching funds of at least 50% of the total project cost (i.e., 50/50 match means that of the 100% total project cost, 50% is 319(h) funds and 50% is non-federal match). The overall project budget must distinguish between 319(h) reimbursable expenses and non-federal matching funds. In addition, separate budgets must be provided for cash versus in-kind match.

i. *Cash match* — as defined by 40 CFR 31.3, consists of “the grantee’s cash outlay, including the outlay of money contributed to the grantee or sub-grantee by other public agencies and institutions, and private organizations and individuals.”

ii. *In-kind match* — is any donation of time, equipment, supplies, etc., where no actual cash changes hands between the grantee and the non-federal donating organization. Use the following sources to establish the value of in-kind services (or provide other justification):

- Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates, Wage Data by State, Bureau of Labor Statistics, online at: http://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_nv.htm.
- The 2021 Nevada Occupational Employment and Wages, from the Nevada Dept. of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation Research and Analysis Bureau, online at: <http://www.nevadaworkforce.com/?PAGEID=67&SUBID=117> ; and/or
- The local Farm Services Agency (FSA) cost share rates for equipment time (hourly or daily) or the lowest of three estimates from local rental companies or contractors.

Example 1: Volunteers donate 8 hrs. of labor to plant seedlings during National Public Lands Day.

Example 2: A company or landowner donates 300 ft of fence material.

Note: The value of in-kind services/labor will only be accepted from providers who are 16 years of age and older.

b. Budget Categories. Itemize total costs for each category shown below:

- i. *Salaries/Wages*** - Expenses for salaries or wages must be included in the budget. The budget summary should list the position title and base salary rate for individuals who will work on the project. The budget detail for salaries should contain a breakdown of the estimated number of hours for each staff person.
- ii. *Fringe Benefits*** — Fringe benefits are items such as health insurance, retirement, and medical benefits. The budget detail should list the percentage of the base salary rate used to calculate the fringe benefits. If different fringe benefit rates apply to different personnel, the rates must be listed separately for each position.
- iii. *Operating***— All operating costs, including supplies, materials, and light meals and refreshments (if applicable) must be itemized in the budget detail.
- iv. *Travel*** - Travel costs include transportation, per diem, and lodging. Itemize travel costs in the Budget Detail and Cost Breakdown. Vendors shall abide by NDEP and/or state policy regarding travel status and will be required to use State travel forms for the purposes of requesting reimbursement for travel related expenses. A summary of the most important information for the purposes of cost proposal development is provided below (additional information can be provided upon request).

Travel Status: The vendor's employee must be at least 50 miles from their respective workstation to gain travel status and receive reimbursement for per diem and lodging expenses. Employees in travel status shall receive reimbursement at a rate comparable to the rates established by the US General Services Administration (GSA) for the State of Nevada. Maximum per diem reimbursement rates for Nevada's lodging, meals, and incidental expenses are established by city/county and vary by season.

Receipts are required for all lodging expenses. Actual lodging cost not exceeding the standard (non-surveyed) Continental United States (CONUS) federal per diem rate, or less, may be requested. In addition to the reimbursable lodging rates, vendors may be reimbursed for lodging taxes and

appropriate fees. Lodging taxes are limited to the taxes on reimbursable lodging costs.

Costs for Light Meals and Refreshments, except for meal purchases associated with travel, are only allowed pursuant to Grants Policies. In general, costs may be charged to Light Meals and Refreshments in relation to long-duration meetings where the refreshments or meals are necessary for effective and efficient achievement of its purpose.

Receipts are not required for the M&IE allowance. Eligible times to receive per diem meal reimbursements are as follows:

To claim breakfast, a person must enter travel status at least two hours prior to that person’s regularly scheduled shift, and end travel status after the beginning of that person’s regularly scheduled shift. To claim lunch, a person must enter travel status at least one hour prior to that person’s regularly scheduled lunch break, and end travel status at least one hour after the end of that person’s regularly scheduled lunch break. To claim dinner, a person must enter travel status prior to the end of the person’s scheduled shift, and end travel status two or more hours after the end of the person’s regularly scheduled shift.

The following table contains additional information regarding allowable rates for travel expenses incurred:

TRAVEL EXPENSE	ALLOWABLE RATE	MORE INFORMATION AVAILABLE AT:
Per Diem	GSA Rate	http://www.gsa.gov
Lodging	Actual Cost capped at GSA Rate	http://www.gsa.gov
Parking	Actual Cost	
Transportation		
	Vehicle Mileage	NV State Rate \$0.67/mile as of 7/1/24
	Airfare	Actual Cost (First Class Prohibited)
	Public Transit	Actual Cost

Either *Indirect Cost (IDC)* or *Overhead* — often used to fulfill match requirements, these costs can be reimbursed if the following requirements are met. *IDC* charges are only available to entities that have a negotiated *IDC rate* with their cognizant agency. NDEP will allow use of the 10% *de minimis* rate for an applicant that does not have a current negotiated rate over 10% and is not exempt from using the *de minimis* rate [RAIN-2018-G02-R | US EPA](#). *Overhead* may be expressed as a percentage of the direct costs. If you include *overhead* in your reimbursable budget, you must itemize the specific costs included in determining your *overhead rate*. NDEP's maximum allowable IDC rate is 35%. IDC above this threshold may be used for in-kind contributions.

v. *Equipment* — individual item purchases of \$500 or more must be listed separately.

vi. *Subcontracts* — if applicable, separately identify all costs associated with subcontracted work on the project. All conditions described above (Section 6) apply to any subcontract. Subcontract costs must be itemized in the Budget Detail and Cost Breakdown. Sub-contracting should 1) be included in the project schedule, and 2) must be done in accordance with Federal procurement requirements including 2 CFR Part 200 Subpart D - Procurement Standards and [Amended Grants Policy Issuance \(GPI\) 16-01 EPA Subaward Policy](#). A separate contract budget must be submitted in the example format for each subcontract when the subcontract is executed.

vii. Costs associated with the following are not allowed:

- Entertainment;
- Debt;
- Finance charges;
- Interest;
- Lobbying expenses and political contributions;
- Legal and professional services; or
- Staff or client relations and/or development.

c. Detailed Budget. To evaluate the cost-benefit of the project, provide a detailed breakdown of project costs. Provide a detailed budget, including the anticipated expenses for all budget categories listed in (b) above. Provide a separate detailed budget breakdown of

the total project cost *by task*. Include the budget in Excel format as an attachment to the proposal submittal email.