

DRINKING WATER PROVIDERS PARTNERSHIP

2023 Request for Proposals (RFP)



Proposal Deadline is 7 January 2023 at 5:00PM Pacific Time
Award announcements will be made in February 2023

Download Application:

<https://geosinstitute.org/initiatives/dwpp>

The Drinking Water Providers Partnership (DWPP) is inviting project proposals for 2023. The partnership includes USDA Forest Service, Geos Institute, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, Washington Department of Health, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Bureau of Land Management, and The Freshwater Trust. Together, the partners present this watershed restoration funding opportunity for water providers and watershed restoration practitioners in Oregon and Washington. The goals of the DWPP are to:

- Restore and protect the health of watersheds which communities depend upon for drinking water.
- Improve aquatic and riparian ecosystems, including the native fish that inhabit them
- Support local partnerships of drinking water providers, landowners and restoration experts that successfully implement restoration projects.

Background

The participants in the DWPP share a common vision that watershed restoration is an important and effective way to provide clean, safe, and affordable drinking water to communities while also restoring native fish habitat and protecting fish populations. Responding to on-the-ground demand, the Partnership supports collaborations between drinking water providers and watershed restoration practitioners by coordinating agency funding for activities that will enhance or protect drinking water quality and/or supply that also benefit native fish. Building on seven successful grant award years, the Partnership is pleased to release this Request for Proposals for 2023 projects.

Grant Awards

DWPP funding requests should range between \$10,000 and \$50,000. Project proposals relying on funding from other partners should clearly indicate whether the additional funding has been secured and, if not, include the time-frame for securing the funds. Funded activities must be completed within 18 months of the award start date. See “Terms of Funding” overview in this document for more details.

Eligible Project Types

Benefits to drinking water and native fish: Projects must clearly indicate how they benefit native fish habitat *and* water quality for the public drinking water systems. Projects should focus on activities that will demonstrably improve or protect aquatic, riparian, and/or watershed health. Applicants are encouraged to submit projects identified in a recognized source water protection plan, watershed restoration action plan, rare species recovery plan, and/or other publicly vetted prioritization document. Only projects located in a drinking water source watershed in the state of Oregon or Washington will be considered for funding.

Please see Attachment 1 for a map of source watersheds (i.e., areas upstream of intakes). You can also visit the following sites for interactive map viewers of source watersheds:

- o In Oregon, use <https://www.oregon.gov/deg/wq/programs/Pages/DWP-Maps.aspx>
- o In Washington, use <https://fortress.wa.gov/doh/swap/index.html>

Range of activities: Eligible activities may include feasibility analyses, planning, design, implementation, outreach, education, and effectiveness monitoring. Activities that constitute legally required mitigation for the adverse effects of an activity regulated or otherwise governed by local, state, tribal, or federal law are not eligible.

Types of projects: The following are examples of eligible restoration and conservation projects; the list is not intended to be comprehensive nor exclusive. Please keep in mind that the connection to how proposed projects benefit drinking water and native fish must be clearly made in the application.

- Implementation of pollution prevention or waste reduction projects
- Removal and replacement of aging or undersized culverts
- Removal of dams or other large obstructions for water quality and native fish protection and restoration (not for permitting)
- Breaching or removal of levees and tide gates for water quality and native fish protection and restoration
- Road decommissioning, improvements, or modifications to improve drainage, minimize erosion, and prevent sediment from entering streams
- Reestablishing river flow patterns, meanders, and channels that have been previously altered
- Restoring stream complexity and roughness, increasing streamflow travel times to improve water quality

- Restoring and enhancing connections between lakes, sloughs, side channels, floodplains, and main channels
- Restoring riverbanks and floodplains, including riparian restoration
- Establishing management plans for conservation easements or lands purchased within source areas
- Management plans of forested areas to address catastrophic fires or impacts from recent fires
- Projects to reduce herbicide and/or pesticide application rates and loadings in source areas
- Projects for reforestation or replanting in sensitive or riparian areas
- Installation of fencing to protect sensitive riparian areas
- Development of educational flyers/brochures for purposes of public education
- Implementation of educational outreach projects emphasizing watershed resource conservation
- Planning and preparation for the purchase of lands within the drinking water source area
- Planning and preparation for the purchase of water for instream flow purposes
- Installation of signs at boundaries of zones or protection areas
- Projects to voluntarily decommission onsite sewer systems affecting the source area and connect homes to existing sewer lines
- Voluntary installation of fencing around the immediate water intake area to provide protection
- Structures to divert or treat contaminated storm water runoff affecting the source area, such as bio-swales, or other green infrastructure
- Implementation of conservation measures related to source protection
- Development of an Ecosystem Services project in watershed to fund preservation areas
- Implementation of conservation easements to protect sensitive source areas, such as fencing or habitat restoration

Eligible Awardees

Applications are encouraged from a variety of organizations, including Tribal, local, state, or federal governments, educational institutions, public water systems, non-profit organizations, watershed councils, landowners, and soil and water conservation districts. Applicant type may affect the type of funding that can be awarded from this funding pool. For example, only public water providers are eligible to receive state water quality agency funds and USFS and BLM funds must be used for projects benefiting agency aquatic resources. Because funding in this grant program is coming from both state and federal government funding sources, the Evaluation Committee will match up high ranking projects with the funding they are eligible to receive from the different funding sources.

If you are a public water system with a project cost of less than \$30,000 and your project does not have a USFS or BLM nexus (i.e., not within a drainage that has USFS or BLM lands), it is recommended that you apply directly to your respective state agency* for a source water protection grant.

Terms of Available Funding

We are proud that our Partnership consists of several federal and state agencies. However, this can also lead to some confusion for applicants. To better evaluate whether your project will be competitive for DWPP funding, it is helpful to familiarize yourself with the nature of the Partnership and restrictions associated with its various sources of funding. Note that you do NOT need to identify a specific funding source within the DWPP for your proposal. The Evaluation Committee will match high ranking projects with funding sources. The information below is provided for context.

In 2023, we anticipate between \$400,000 to \$600,000 available to fund projects.

- Grantees may receive grant dollars from one or more of the following three *federal* agencies: USDA Forest Service (USFS) Region 6, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) OR/ WA State Office, and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 10. In 2023, they expect to have approximately \$467,000 available.
- Applicants may also be recommended for *state* funding. Oregon and Washington each run a drinking water source grant program available to public water systems within their respective states. As the Partnership team reviews grant applications, those projects qualifying for state funding sources will be recommended to those programs and the **state staff will work directly with applicants and local drinking water providers to assist with the state application process using the application materials already prepared.**
- **Oregon:** The Oregon Health Authority manages, and administers grant awards through the [Drinking Water Source Protection Fund](#) while the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality assists in the solicitation and review of grant proposals. In 2023, there will be approximately \$100,000 available for source water grants. The OR DEQ & OHA will release their next Request for Proposals in early 2023. Funding under the Oregon Source Protection Fund requires contracting with Business Oregon, meeting state procurement conditions and may not be available until Fall 2023.
- **Washington:** The Washington Department of Health solicits, manages and administers grants through the [Source Water Local Assistance Grant Program](#) In 2023, they expect to have approximately \$100,000 available, with a cap of \$50,000 per project. The Washington Department of Health accepts proposals year-round until funding is exhausted.

The following table offers details regarding the various funding available through the Drinking Water Providers Partnership and is for informational purposes only. Proposals selected for awards will be matched with the appropriate funding source based on the characteristics of the project.

TERMS OF FUNDING OVERVIEW

Funding Source	Who can apply?	Agreement Type	When must funds be used?	Where must project occur?	Estimated Award Date
FEDERAL					
EPA	Tribal, local, state, or federal governments, educational institutions, water systems, non-profit organizations, watershed councils, landowners, soil and water conservation districts, and others.	Applicable, cooperative financial agreement with a local USFS office.	By the end of the following fiscal year.	Within a drinking water source watershed <i>and</i> have a nexus with USFS or BLM lands. The project does not need to occur on USFS or BLM lands. A federal nexus for the purpose of this partnership means that the project will benefit natural resources associated with USFS or BLM lands, such as migratory fish produced on those lands but using down- or up-stream lands for part of their life history.	April 2023: If a cooperative agreement is already in place with the USFS. Summer 2023: If a cooperative agreement needs to be created and signed.
BLM		Applicable, cooperative financial agreement with a local BLM office.	Within 18 months from the grant award start date.		April 2023: If a cooperative agreement is already in place. Fall 2023: If a cooperative agreement needs to be created and signed.
USFS		Applicable, cooperative financial agreement with a local USFS office.	By the end of the following fiscal year.		April 2023: If a cooperative agreement is already in place. Summer 2023: If a cooperative agreement needs to be created and signed.

Funding Source	Who can apply?	Agreement Type	When must funds be used?	Where must project occur?	Estimated Award Date
STATE					
WA DOH	Group A water systems or a local government if the work benefits a Group A system, except for profit Non-Community Systems	Contract with WA DOH	July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2023.	Within a public drinking water watershed <i>and</i> have a drinking water nexus. A drinking water nexus for the purpose of this partnership means that the project will benefit the quality and/or supply of drinking water for a public water system.	Determination made within 60 days of application re-submission to WA DOH.
OHA (in cooperation with OR DEQ and OR IFA)	Public drinking water systems, except Transient and For-Profit Non-Community Systems.	Contract with OHA-Business Oregon	Two full years from the grant agreement date.		Fall 2023

*To learn more about the Oregon Drinking Water Source Protection Fund, visit:

<https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/HEALTHYENVIRONMENTS/DRINKINGWATER/SRF/Pages/spf.aspx>

*To learn more about the Washington Source Water Protection Local Assistance Grant Program, visit:

<https://www.doh.wa.gov/CommunityandEnvironment/DrinkingWater/SourceWater/LocalAssistanceGrantProgram>

Partnerships and Match

One of the goals of the DWPP is to initiate dialogue and strengthen working relationships between water providers and restoration practitioners at a watershed scale. If the applicant is anyone other than a drinking water provider, it should be evident in the funding application that a partnership with the local drinking water system has been developed in order to meet shared goals. A letter of support from the water provider is recommended. Cost-sharing and in-kind contributions by each partner for services, personnel, equipment, and other resources should be documented. A 25% match (in-kind and/or cash) is encouraged and may be required, depending upon the funding source within the DWPP. Therefore, it is best to show at least a 25% match if possible.

Compliance with NEPA and Other State and Federal Regulations

Successful applicants are likely to receive federal funds and will be required to satisfy applicable financial and programmatic requirements and meet all applicable local, state, and Tribal environmental laws and federal requirements before project implementation, including but not limited to the National Environmental Policy Act, Endangered Species Act, National Historic Preservation Act, and Clean Water Act. While these requirements are often completed by the federal partners, if environmental compliance requirements have not already been completed, applicants can request necessary funding in the application. Except from WADOH.

Application Process

- Applicants are required to use the application available at <https://geosinstitute.org/initiatives/dwpp>
- The total application, including attachments, must not exceed 17 pages.
- Responses to narrative questions may be single-spaced and font must be size 12 or larger.
- Applications and all other required documentation must be submitted electronically to james.capurso@usda.gov by 5:00PM PST on 7 January 2023.

Proposal Overview and Evaluation Criteria

Each proposal will be reviewed and evaluated by the Evaluation Committee which is composed of representatives of the seven core DWPP organizations on a scale of 100 points and awarded funding based upon how well it meets the following criteria:

A. Geographic Focus (10 points total)

Only projects that fall within drinking water source watersheds in Oregon and Washington are eligible for consideration.

- To be eligible for *federal* funds, the project must benefit aquatic resources associated with USFS or BLM lands. For example, a project on private land could be funded with federal funds if it improves habitat for migratory fish using federal lands for some part of their life cycle.
- Extra consideration will be given to the distance between the project and the drinking water intake. Projects located nearer to the intake will receive a higher portion of the available points.
- Extra consideration will be given to projects that fall within, or will result in benefits to, a “Priority Watershed,” or “Focus Watershed,” as identified by the USFS or the BLM. See attachments for maps and lists of names.
- Extra consideration will be given to designated sensitive areas as identified in a Source Water Assessment or watershed plan. For questions, consult with your drinking water provider or a state funding representative listed below.

B. Project Description, Justification, and Goals (35 points total)

Description: Briefly describe the proposed activities and methods and how the project restores and protects drinking water and benefits native fish. If this project is part of a larger phased project, describe the overall project, but clearly identify the discrete activities of this phase for which funding is sought (note: all subsequent application answers should be specific to the discrete activities of this phase). Please include a pre-project photo.

Justification: What is the problem the project is addressing? Note that it is imperative that the benefits to drinking water quality or supply are clearly evident. E.g., what priority risks to drinking water quality and key limiting factors to native fish viability will this work affect? Have the proposed activities been identified in an existing source water control or watershed restoration plan? If so, cite the specific reports used to justify this work. If pesticides/herbicides are being used, explain why other alternatives (e.g., mechanical removal) were considered to be ineffective.

Goals, Benefits, and Outcomes: Summarize the project goals and anticipated outcomes. E.g., how will the proposed work address the problem(s) identified in the project justification section above? Include short- and long-term benefits to water quality or supply, but also to aquatic and riparian habitat and the species dependent upon them; e.g. number of acres or miles of habitat improved, the magnitude of improvements. Benefits and outcomes may also be described in terms of economic or social impacts, such as changes in public opinion, attitudes, or behavior; e.g., using trail-user surveys.

C. Capacity (30 points total)

Partners: The development of local, grassroots partnerships between restoration practitioners and water providers is one of the goals of the DWPP. It should be clear that the relevant public water system(s) is familiar with and supportive of the proposed work. Applicant should also indicate whether the drinking water system is willing to act as a grant recipient, should the funding source require it. If the applicant is not the public water system manager, a letter of support from the public water system manager is recommended, but not required. In addition to the grassroots partnerships, value is placed on the extent to which partners are involved in the project, as measured by the number and level of confirmed partner contributions. Use the table provided to document cash and in-kind contributions by each partner for services, personnel, equipment, and other project resources.

Experience. Applicants must show capacity to implement the scope and scale of the proposed work and the ability to successfully complete the project within the proposed budget and timeline. Organizations previously participating in similar projects with a proven record of project completion and qualified staff may score higher during the evaluation process.

Timeline and Readiness: The project timeline should be feasible and appropriate given the project activities, goals, and budget. The applicant should clearly describe project “readiness” as the degree to which the project is ready for implementation in terms of landowner willingness (include a letter of support from the landowner), NEPA standing, design, permits, and/or contract preparation. A project that is unambiguously ready for implementation during the grant award period may score higher during evaluation.

D. Effectiveness & Engagement (15 points total)

Monitoring: Project monitoring is required and should be described. Implementation monitoring is required (e.g., was the project implemented as described? Were the project design parameters achieved?). Project monitoring reports must include before and after photos illustrating the issue(s) the project is addressing and then the effects of the project. Projects that incorporate effectiveness monitoring (Did the project perform as promised?) and/or leverage existing monitoring efforts within the watershed may score higher during evaluation. Note that a project report will be required to be submitted upon completion of the project, using the Partnership’s final report template. If appropriate, consider using raw water turbidity data collected by the public water system at the source intake for effectiveness monitoring of the impact of your project on drinking water. Project monitoring report templates are posted on the Geos website, <https://geosinstitute.org/initiatives/dwpp/>

Community Outreach: Ideal projects will demonstrate a high degree of community involvement in and benefit from project development, implementation, and monitoring. Proposals including complementary public outreach and awareness-building components contributing to their watershed restoration project may be stronger than those without outreach activities.

E. Budget (10 points total)

The budget table should detail all funds requested, as well as all matching funds and in-kind contributions, and whether the contributions are pending or secured. If pending, the time-frame for securing funds should be included. The budget form provided in the application must be used. Applicants that show at least a 25% match will be more competitive due to constraints of some of the funding in this pool.

Points of Contact

The members of the DWPP look forward to working with you to foster working partnerships between water providers and restoration practitioners throughout Oregon and Washington. Please don't hesitate to contact any of the following individuals with questions.

<u>Affiliation:</u>	<u>Contact:</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Phone:</u>	<u>Email:</u>
USDA Forest Service	James Capurso	Regional Fisheries Biologist	503-808-2847	james.capurso@usda.gov
Oregon DEQ	Julie Harvey	Drinking Water Protection Coordinator	503-229-5664	julie.harvey@deq.oregon.gov
Washington DOH	Nikki Guillot	Source Water Protection Manager	360-236-3153	Nikki.Guillot@doh.wa.gov
US BLM	Scott Lightcap	Fisheries Program Lead, OR/WA	541-464-3325	slightca@blm.gov
US EPA	Dan Brown	Natural Resource Advisor	503-326-6832	Brown.Dan@epa.gov
The Freshwater Trust	Mark McCollister	Habitat Restoration Director	503-222-9091x15	Mark@thefreshwatertrust.org
Geos Institute	Tonya Graham	Working Waters Director	541-482-4459 x-309	tonya@geosinstitute.org

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Links to Drinking Water Source Watershed Maps

- Washington and Oregon
https://geosinstitute.org/images/Initiatives/dwpp/DWPP_Source_Watersheds_map.pdf
- Washington only:
https://geosinstitute.org/images/Initiatives/dwpp/DWPP_Source_Watersheds_map_WA_2020.pdf
- Oregon only:
https://geosinstitute.org/images/Initiatives/dwpp/DWPP_Source_Watersheds_map_OR_2020.pdf