Growing Greener Plus Grants Program

Watershed Restoration and Protection

Grant Applicant Presentation

April 21, 2024

Josh Shapiro, Governor

Jessica Shirley, Interim Acting Secretary

Agenda

- Welcome
- Overview
- What's New?
- Eligibility
- Funding
- Priorities
- Preparing a Proposal
- Successful Projects

Pennsylvania
Department of Environmental Protection

Growing Greener
Plus Grants Program
Funding Watershed Planning,
Restoration and Protection Efforts
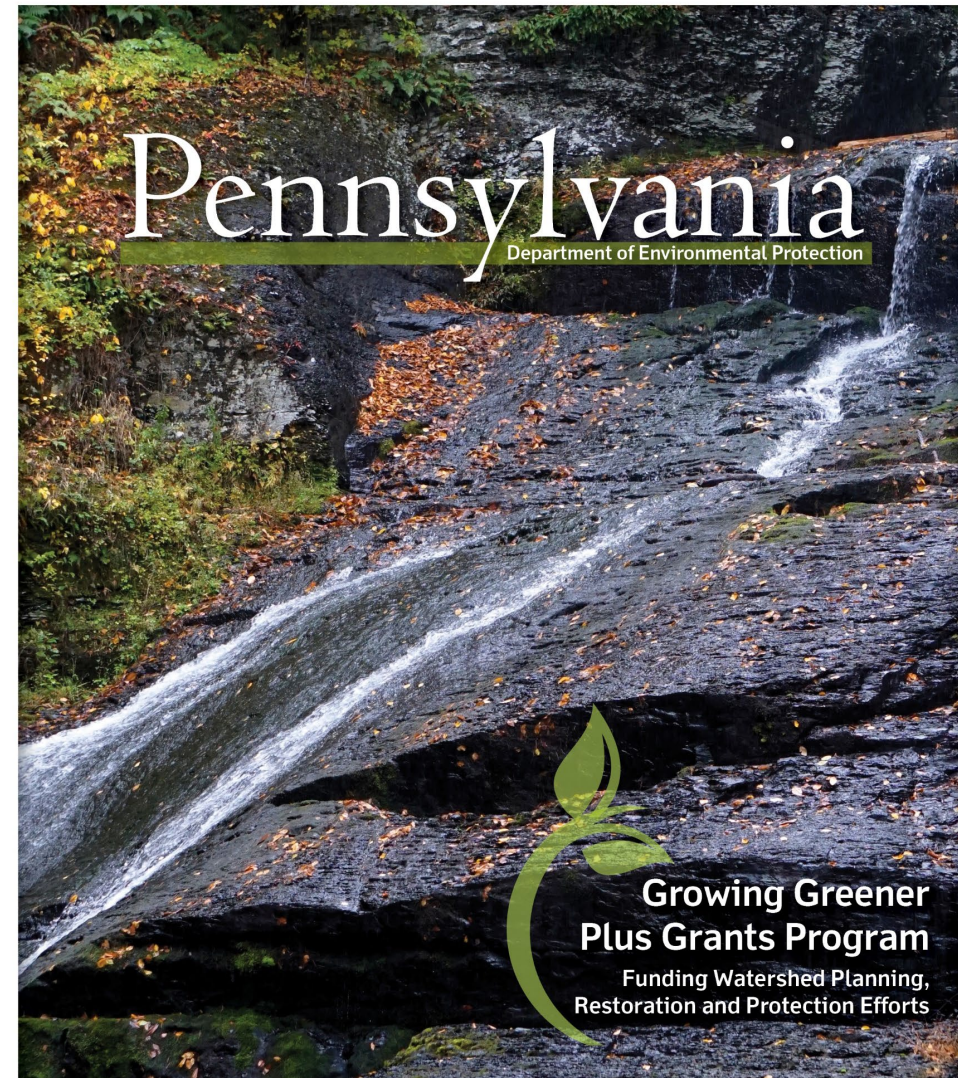
Section 1: Overview and Purpose

Overview

- Introduction
- Two grant programs
- Overview
  - Environmental Stewardship and Watershed Protection Act
  - Watershed Restoration and Protection grants
- Purpose
  - Restore and protect from nonpoint source pollution

What is Growing Greener?

- Largest single investment
- Grants implement watershed activities
- Current funding
- Tipping fees
- Act 13
- Amounts vary

NPS Management Plan

Improve and protect

- AMD and energy resource extraction
- Agricultural activities
- Stormwater runoff, streambank and shoreline degradation
- Develop and update watershed plans

Section 2: What's New?

What's New?

- Applications due June 21st at 11:59 p.m.

- Chesapeake Bay Agriculture Projects
  - Priority construction funding sources
    - Design and permitting are eligible
    - Countywide Action Plan (CAP) Implementation Grant
    - Agricultural Conservation Assistance Program (ACAP)
    - Agricultural construction projects will be considered for Growing Greener with justification

- 2024 Integrated Water Quality Report

What's New?

- Growing Greener Watershed Renaissance Initiative - expanded statewide.
  - Agriculturally impaired small catchments with 25 or fewer land parcels identified by a TMDL or Advanced Restoration Plan (ARP)
- Commonwealth Investment Criteria preference - removed
- Act 167 Stormwater Management Planning Grants Program is no longer available through Growing Greener Plus Grants Program

Section 3: Eligibility

Eligible Applicants

- Incorporated watershed associations
- Counties, county planning commissions, or municipalities
- County conservation districts
- Council of governments
- Non-profit organizations
  - 501(c)(3)
  - Registered with Pennsylvania Bureau of Charitable Organizations
- Educational institutions
- Municipal authorities

Eligible Applications

- Complete/submitted by
  due date and time through eGrants
- Budget correct, eligible expenses
  does not exceed maximum amount
  and meets requirements
- Applicants contacted by deadline
  - DEP
  - Countywide Action Team
  - Conservation District Watershed Specialist
- Good standing with Commonwealth
- Program specific criteria

Ineligible Projects

- Negatively impacts public health or out of state

- Post-construction stormwater management BMPs caused by new or proposed construction activities

- No landowner commitment letters for projects on state-owned land

- AMDTreat report missing

- Landowner letters not included or not in the process of being obtained

- Preclude access to or use of forested land for sustainable forestry and commercial production of timber or other forest products

Ineligible Projects

- Project does not meet eligibility requirements

- Project workplan missing

- Project exceeds $500,000 maximum grant request amount

- Applications submitted late

- Projects with less than the required 15% match

- Project sites and/or applicants with outstanding compliance obligations

Ineligible Expenses

- Outdoor recreation construction—gazebos, pavilions, decks, trails and bridges
- Dredging of streams, lakes, ponds or other waterways
- Administrative expenses more than five percent
- Registration fees for workshops
- Clothing or give-away materials
- Membership dues not directly related to project implementation

Check out the "Budget Primer"

Section 4: Priorities

Priorities

1. BMP Implementation Projects

2. Technical Assistance
   - Regional or statewide projects with public-private partnerships that expedite on-the-ground, BMP implementation

3. Planning
   - Agricultural erosion and sediment control or nutrient and manure management plans

4. Healthy Waters and Watershed Renaissance Initiative
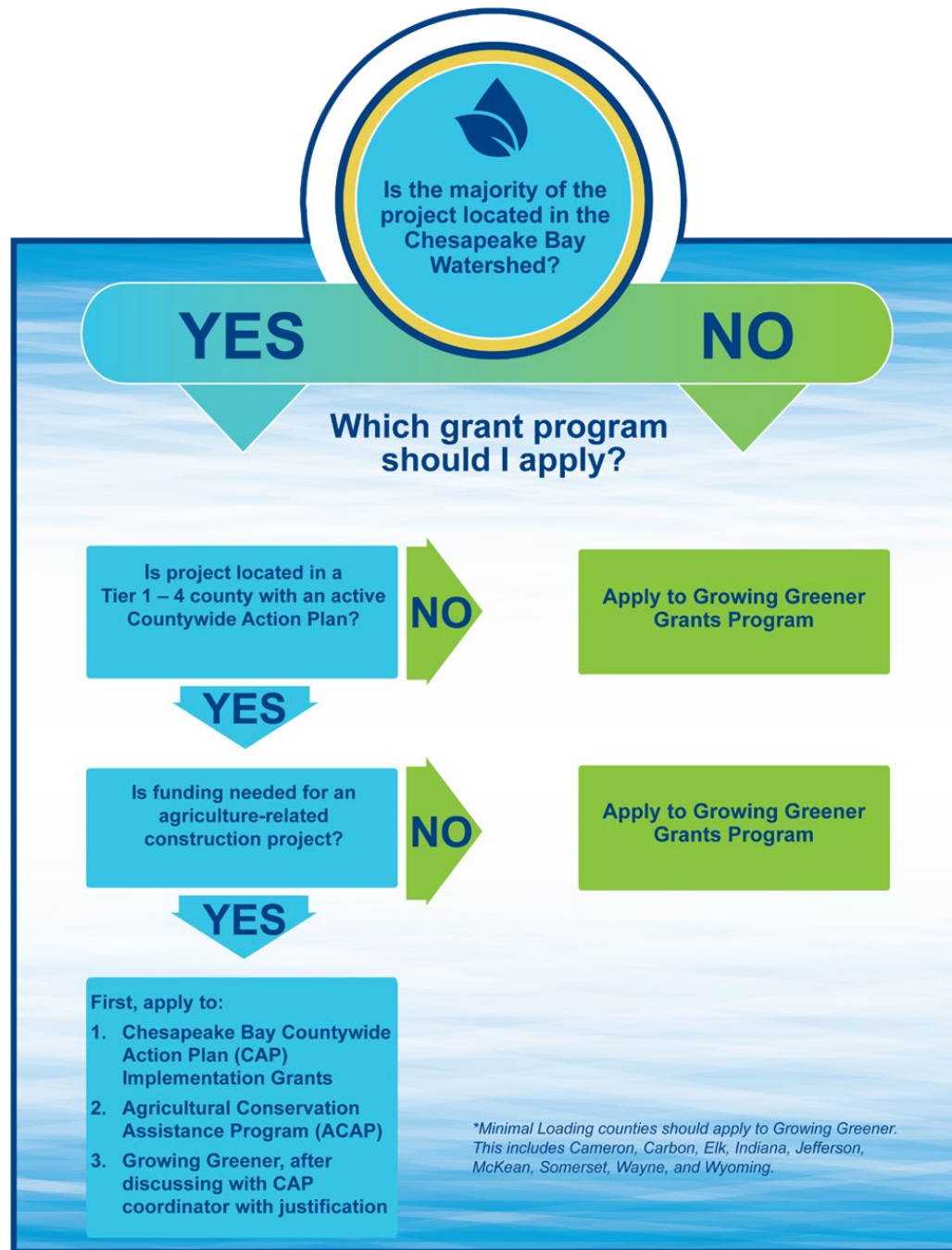
5. Priority projects located in or benefiting EJ Areas

Preferences

- Projects located or benefiting EJ areas.
- Act 47 financially distressed municipalities
- Co-benefits climate resiliency, as identified in the Pennsylvania 2021 Climate Action Plan
- Watershed-based plan implementation
- More than the minimum match requirement
- Provides significant improvement to water quality based upon pollutant load reductions
- For existing grantees, failure to submit timely and complete reports and accurate reimbursement requests may result in decreased competitiveness

Not sure? Use the flow chart.

Growing Greener

"Minimal Loading" Counties

Design and Permitting Only

Growing Greener

Addresses Other Pollutants

Other Project Category

Other River Basin

Section 5: Funding

Funding

- Maximum request
  - $500,000
- Average award - $235,000
- Grant period of performance – 3 years

Section 6: Preparing the Proposal

Project Categories

- Design and Construction
- Planning
  - Watershed Assessment and Restoration Plans
  - Ag E&S Control
  - Nutrient and Manure Management Plans
- Education and Outreach
- Operation, Maintenance and Repair/Replacement
- Technical Assistance

Project Categories

- Evaluation, Assessment and Monitoring Tools for Watershed Management Planning

- Watershed Group Organization/Support

- Healthy Waters Initiative

- Renaissance Initiative

Renaissance Initiative

- Reduce nutrient and sediment impairments in agriculturally-impaired waterways
  - 2024 Integrated Report
- Complete implementation of watershed restoration plans on small catchment areas
  - Approximately 25 or fewer land parcels
  - Centre, Huntingdon, Lancaster, Snyder and Union counties
  - Others – ARPs and TMDLs

A Watershed

precipitation
rain
snow
watershed divide
tributaries
watershed divide
percolation
percolation
groundwater (aquifer)
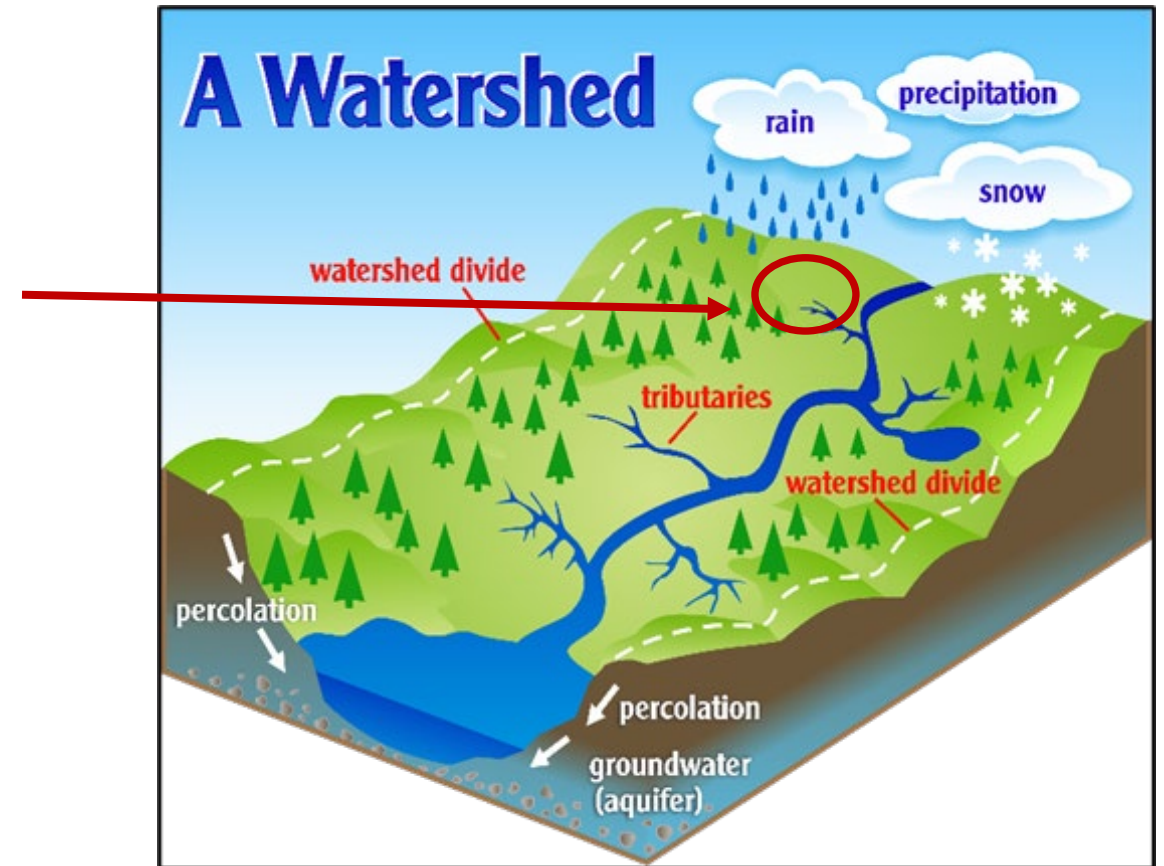
Watershed Renaissance Initiative

- Complete BMP implementation in 7 years

- Rapid delisting in 10 years

- Phase 1
  - Landowner education and outreach
  - Agricultural planning
    - Chapter 102 Erosion and Sediment Control and/or Chapter 91 manure management requirements
  - Design/engineering
  - Permitting and Data Management
  - Structural BMPs meet NRCS standards and specifications

- Phase 2 - construction

TMDL and ARP Catchment Example

- 2024 Integrated Report Viewer

- Query
  - Category 4a – TMDL
  - Category 5r - ARP
  - Tutorials available

- TMDL/ARP webpage
  - Search Water Quality TMDL
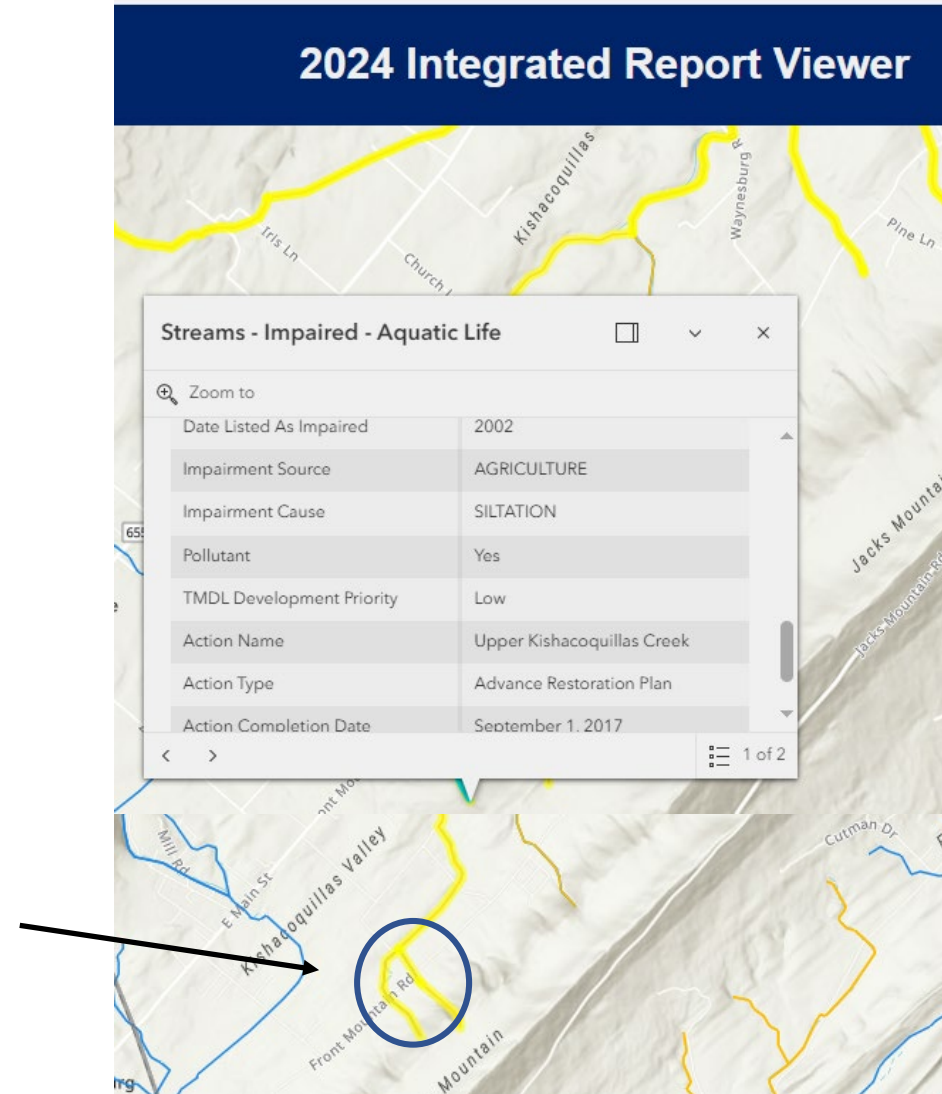
Catchment Example

- Air Hill Road (Headwaters to Chiques Creek)

Catchment Name	Acres	Square Miles	County Name	NHD Flowline COMID		Impairment Sources and Causes
Air Hill Road (formerly Headwaters to Chiques Creek)	294	0.46	Lancaster	57461907 57461891	57461889 57461893	AGRICULTURE - SILTATION

Check pages 17-21 of guidance

Common Projects

- Design and Construction
- Most common category of projects
- Agriculture BMP projects on priority areas
- Barnyard improvements, stream fencing, buffers, crossings
- Urban/residential stormwater reductions projects
- To reduce the volume of runoff
- Rain gardens, basin retrofits, MS4-related projects
- Infiltration practices

Helpful Tips

Check out the examples on Growing Greener webpage

Preparing a Proposal

- Break large projects up into stages
  - Stage 1 - Design and permit
  - Stage 2 - Construction

- Must discuss with DEP regional or statewide staff prior to submitting application (May 31st)
  - Determine project eligibility and relevance
  - Provide guidance in the completion of the application

- Discuss with County Conservation District (May 31st)

- Discuss/share with Chesapeake Bay Community Clean Water Coordinator (May 31st)

- Must be willing to maintain the project

Helpful Tips

Start early. Don't wait until deadline to discuss project.

Project Workplan

- Project Workplan
    - Project Summary
    - Environmental Need
    - Funding Justification
    - Environmental Justice
    - Partnerships and Match

Check out the example on Growing Greener webpage

Project Workplan

- Project Workplan
  - Scope of Work
    - Goals and Deliverables
    - Timeline
  - Contractor Provisions
  - Project Data
  - Landowner Situation
- Attachments
  - Application Completeness Checklist

Helpful Tips

Model My Watershed is recommended model for nutrients/sediment load reductions

Attachments

- Landowner Letters
  - Landowner Access Authorization
  - Landowner Letter of Commitment or Landowner-Grantee Agreement
- Project Location Map
- Project Site Map
- Project Site Photos
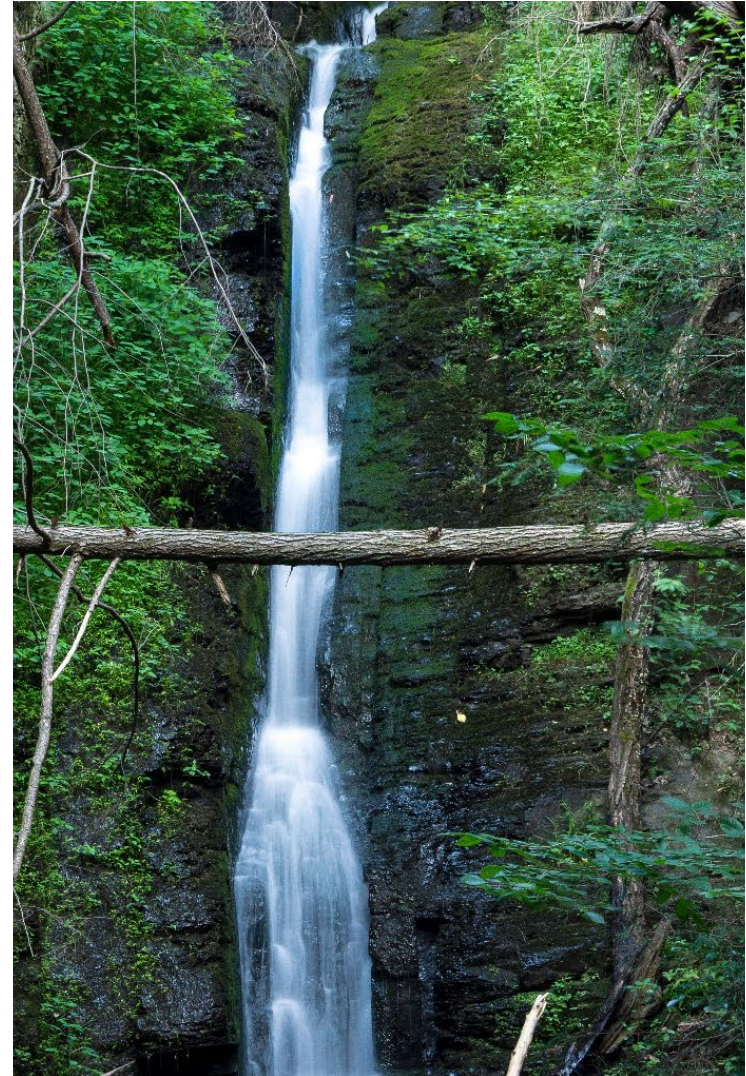
Additional Attachments

- Project Workplan

- Chesapeake Bay CAP Project Category Form

- Task and Deliverables Budget Worksheet
  - whole numbers only and no lump sums

- AMDTreat Report

- Land Use Planning Form or Letter
  - Multi-municipal planning forms

- Worker Protection and Investment

- Letters of commitment for match

Download the forms and check out the examples on the GG webpage.

Application Deadlines

- April 22, 2024
  - Grant round opens

- May 31, 2024
  - Contact DEP staff, Community Clean Water Coordinators, County Conservation District

- June 21, 2024
  - Applications due before 11:59 p.m.
  - Commonwealth eGrants system (www.esa.dced.state.pa.us)

eGrants

Commonwealth eGrants system (www.esa.dced.state.pa.us)

Need help with eGrants? Customer Service
833-448-0647 or egrantshelp@pa.gov

Section 7: Successful Projects

Successful Projects

- Successful projects announced through a press release/website

- Grantees notified

- Some awards may be for less than requested

  - Grantee may accept or reject

- Grant contracts are developed based on the award

  - Signed electronically

Successful Projects

- DEP project advisors assigned to each project
  - Review invoices and progress reports
  - Verify practices installed
  - Provide guidance on implementation
  - Help with questions

For more information visit DEP's website: www.dep.pa.gov

e-mail: RA-EPGrowingGreener@pa.gov

DEP Grants Center – 717-705-5400