

River Stewardship Program Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
Version: March 15, 2022

#	Question	Answer
1.	What is the source of the River Stewardship Program funding and how much is currently available?	<p>Each year the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) requests \$1.5 million in capital outlay funds from the New Mexico Legislature to plan, design and construct projects that improve surface water quality and river habitat statewide. This addresses a critical surface water quality need and provides needed matching funds for New Mexico to continue to receive federal Clean Water Act funds.</p> <p>Additionally, NMED received a special appropriation of \$10 million of State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) from the New Mexico Legislature. These funds will be available for projects in an RFP to be released in Spring 2022.</p>
2.	What is the minimum and maximum project amount that the River Stewardship Program will fund?	There are no maximum or minimum, however, funds are limited. Typically, project costs have ranged from \$50,000 to \$500,000.
3.	How will the projects be selected?	NMED will follow the state procurement rules. An RFP will be issued, and applicants will have several weeks to prepare proposals. Proposals will be selected based on their merits in response to the requested information in the RFP. An evaluation committee will rank proposals based on evaluation criteria stated within the RFP.
4.	Who is eligible to apply for funding?	There is broad eligibility for applying for funding. Eligible Offerors include: towns, cities, counties, soil and water conservation districts, irrigation districts, for-profit and not-for profit organizations, state agencies, Indian Nations, Pueblos and Tribes. Federal agencies are not eligible. In order to establish a contract with the State of New Mexico, an Offeror must register as a vendor for the state with the New Mexico Department of Finance and Administration and either be a registered business with the New Mexico Taxation and Revenue Department or be a government entity.
5.	What are the priority areas for funding?	NMED is not identifying priority areas for River Stewardship Program funding. The Offeror must describe water quality and/or stream habitat impairments using existing information about a site.
6.	What kind of projects will be funded?	NMED is seeking projects that improve surface water quality or river habitat within a waterway or its associated riparian area or floodplain through on-the-ground activities that may be accompanied by changes in land management. Surface waters of the State of New Mexico as defined in NMAC 20.6.4.7 are eligible for funding.

7.	Are projects on government lands eligible?	Yes, projects on government lands are eligible.
8.	Are projects on private lands eligible?	Projects on private lands may be eligible if they pass an anti-donation clause review by the Evaluation Committee and State Board of Finance.
9.	What costs are allowable for reimbursement with River Stewardship Program Funds?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design • Permitting • Construction • Pre-and post-implementation monitoring • Supplies that are permanently affixed to the project or completely expended during the project term • Hourly wages for direct work on the project • Equipment rental
10.	What costs are not allowable for reimbursement?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salaries or percentage of salaries • Wages for government employees • Equipment or supplies that are not permanently affixed to the project or completely expended during the project term • Ongoing maintenance beyond the project term
11.	Will letters of support be required for submission of a project?	Letters of support are not required but are highly recommended. In particular, letters of support from local governments documenting the community need, involvement and support of the project as well as letters from applicable landowner(s), land management agencies, and other partners help document cooperators support related to proposal evaluation criteria. A proposal that does not demonstrate landowner and/or land manager support is not likely to be funded.
12.	How will the funding be distributed once the projects are selected?	NMED will establish reimbursable contracts or government agreements. The New Mexico state procurement rules require that NMED operate on a reimbursable basis with submittal of invoices and documentation of valid expenditures.
13.	Is there a match requirement that a Contractor must contribute in order to receive River Stewardship Program funds?	No, there is not a requirement for supplying, identifying and tracking matching funds. However, we encourage proposals that provide some level of outside funds to allow for: ongoing maintenance or adaptive management; education and outreach; and longer-term monitoring – which are typically not allowable expenses for reimbursement under this funding source.
14.	Can a Contractor that receives River Stewardship Program funding use the funding as match to	Typically no, NMED intends to use the River Stewardship Program funding to match EPA Clean Water Act grants that are awarded to the State of New Mexico. However, it is possible that some of the SLFRF funding awarded to NMED in December 2021 could be used non-federal match for certain federal grants. Offerors must disclose their intent to use River Stewardship Funding as non-federal match in the proposal if that is a consideration for the project.

	leverage other grants?	
15.	What is the expiration date on the funds?	The timeline for use of capital outlay funds is four years. The timeline for use of the SLFRF funds will be June 30, 2025.
16.	Can River Stewardship funds be used to pay for planning?	Funds can be used to pay for planning within the context of completing an on-the-ground restoration project but not for planning as the exclusive end-product (such as developing a watershed plan).
17.	Who should we consult with while developing a project?	You should consult with local governments, land managers and property owners, permitting agencies and other stakeholders while planning a project. It is crucial to the success of your proposal that you demonstrate the support and commitment of the community and applicable stakeholders – especially any organization, agency or person that will be providing site access, personnel time or resources to the project.
18.	Who do I contact with questions about the RFP?	For questions about the River Stewardship Program before the RFP is released, please contact Kate Lacey (505) 946-8863 (Kathryn.Lacey@state.nm.us) or Abe Franklin (505) 827-2793 (Abraham.Franklin@state.nm.us). During the RFP period, any inquiries to the State of New Mexico should be submitted, in writing, to the Procurement Manager identified in the RFP via email. Offerors may contact ONLY the Procurement Manager regarding the RFP. Other state employees or Evaluation Committee members will not have the authority to respond on behalf of the State.
19.	Will NMED consider proposals that address stream reaches that are currently attaining water quality standards for their designated uses?	Yes. The River Stewardship Program is not limited to impaired reaches.
20.	Does my project have to be in an area with an EPA-approved watershed-based plan?	No. The RFP will ask for a reference to a planning document in order to justify need and support for the project, but the planning document does not have to be an EPA watershed-based plan. Natural resource planning documents developed by local, state, federal and tribal agencies are examples of other types of valid planning documents.