

September 30, 2011

Dear Watershed Program Partner:

We are pleased to announce the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Soil and Water Resources in concert with other state water quality partners, is soliciting proposals for **Implementation Phase Ohio Watershed Coordinator Grants**. The goal of this grant program is to locally employ watershed coordinators to facilitate and energize rapid and focused implementation of state endorsed watershed action plans and or TMDL.

### Grant Purpose and Priorities

The purpose of the Watershed Coordinator Implementation Grant is to facilitate local implementation of recommended actions within endorsed watershed action plans and/or approved TMDLs. The grant is designed to provide local groups with the resources needed to

A **Watershed Coordinator** organizes people and resources to achieve collectively agreed upon water quality goals for a specific, locally defined watershed.

**Stakeholders** are individuals and entities with an interest in and/or ability to take action on a watershed issue.

support the compensation of a full-time dedicated watershed coordinator. This employee will be tasked with working with local implementing agencies such as local governments, park districts, soil & water conservation districts and others to stimulate completion of recommended actions necessary for improving water quality as defined in the endorsed plan.

This grant and all associated match may only be used to support the compensation (wages and benefits) for a full-time employee serving exclusively as a **watershed coordinator**. Funding shall only be considered for watersheds with state endorsed watershed action plans (WAPs). Watersheds with “fully” endorsed WAPs are significantly preferred over watersheds with “conditionally” endorsed WAPs. Proposals describing a clear and focused implementation strategy to eliminate water quality impairments and/or restore impaired waters will receive higher priority over those describing broad, watershed-wide pollution prevention or preservation approaches.

Grant funded watershed coordinators are also expected to perform the following program objectives:

1. Promote substantial implementation of priority projects identified from an endorsed Watershed Action Plan and/or TMDL.
2. Update the state endorsed WAP as necessary incorporating TMDL data, load reduction goals, and technical recommendations;
3. Track implementation of endorsed WAP by all implementing partner agencies;
4. Utilize the DSWR Soil and Water Information Management System (SWIMS) for time and activity tracking and reporting; and
5. Participate in training opportunities and other state sponsored events recommended by DSWR.

## Financial Provisions

- Applicants may request up to \$105,000 for three years (\$35,000 per year maximum). Lesser requests are encouraged.
- Proposals must include an annual cash match of at least 20% of the grant request. For example, a \$35,000 annual request requires \$7,000 of cash match. The cash match may be comprised of funds obtained from any source. If more than 50% of the watershed area is within one or more “Distressed County” as defined by the Ohio Department of Development\* the sponsor cash match minimum is reduced to 10%.  
\* Distressed County Map:  
<http://www.development.ohio.gov/research/documents/PIA11JUL.pdf>
- All grant funds and associated match must be spent on the watershed compensation (wages and fringe).
- Eligible fringe benefits include health care, retirement, unemployment\*, worker’s compensation, Medicaid, etc. Only actual fringe benefit payments for the watershed coordinator are allowable. Fringe benefit costs may NOT be estimated.  
\*Sponsors who are exempted from paying unemployment compensation insurance, but pay unemployment costs only when claims are filed may not accrue (hold) grant funds to pay unemployment liabilities in case the coordinator later files for unemployment compensation.
- Grant funds are disbursed in quarterly installments contingent upon Division of Soil and Water Resources revenue.
- Continued funding is directly based upon satisfactory achievement of identified performance standards, fulfillment of the grant sponsor reporting obligations, and sufficient progress toward grant objectives.
- The grant sponsor and watershed partners are expected to raise sufficient funds to continue the watershed coordinator position beyond the term of the grant.

## Eligibility

The following entities based within Ohio are eligible to submit proposals: nonprofit organizations with 501(c)3 status (must include an IRS determination letter with the proposal), institutions of higher education, and local units of government within Ohio, e.g. soil and water conservation districts, regional planning agencies, park districts, and conservancy districts.

## Application Deadline & Review Procedures

The deadline for submitting Ohio Watershed Coordinator Grant – Implementation Phase proposals is close of business **Friday, November 4, 2011**. Applications must be complete and received and/or postmarked by the above date to be considered for funding. Applications postmarked (or hand-delivered) after this date will be returned to the applicant without further consideration.

Please submit one (1) original application with **original** (blue ink) signatures and one (1) copy of the application in Adobe Reader (pdf) format on CD. Completed applications may be mailed or delivered to:

Greg Nageotte, Watershed Program Manager  
ODNR Division of Soil and Water Resources  
2045 Morse Rd., B-3  
Columbus, OH 43229

Upon receipt, all Ohio Watershed Coordinator Grant applications will be reviewed for completeness and conformance to proposal guidelines. Applications found to be administratively complete will undergo a comprehensive, multi-agency, review using criteria designed to evaluate and score the following:

1. Environmental results to be achieved
2. WAP endorsement status (significant priority for "full" state endorsement);
3. Applicant's prior performance with Ohio Watershed Coordinator Grant Program
4. Ability of local sponsor to administer funding and deliver the program;
5. Strength and diversity of the local watershed partnership
6. Amount requested (lower grant request will improve competitiveness);
7. Local match (larger local contribution will improve competitiveness);
8. Scope and achievability of water quality improvement priorities; and
9. Existing environmental quality and restorability of the watershed.

Upon completion of all reviews, applications will be ranked according to their review scores and recommendations for funding will be developed based upon this ranking. Funding decisions will be made by the director of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources.

Application Materials:

Application materials and instructions may be downloaded from the following Web location: <http://www.dnr.state.oh.us/tabid/9192/Default.aspx>

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